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The Nation.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MAY 26, 1910.

The Week.

In looking about for Democratic possibilities for 1912, it is well not to overlook the most important of all possibilities, namely, the Democratic party itself. Gov. Harmon is possible; Mayor Gaynor is possible; Gov. Marshall is possible; and there are others. If only the Democracy does not become impossible by 1912, all of these men are possible. For it will probably be true in 1912, in a degree in which it has not been true since 1896, that the issue rather than the man will count. The issue may be a negative one from the Democratic point of view. It may consist chiefly in Republican misrule. But that is all the more reason why the man will count less than the party. That Harmon, Gaynor, or Marshall shall continue to shape into fine Presidential timber is therefore of far less importance than that the Democratic party shall not throw away, in the course of the next two years, the opportunity that lies close to hand. The traditional Democratic policy of killing opportunity and playing into Republican hands has been broken of late. In New York State, in Indiana, and at Washington the Democrats have recently had the choice to do the right thing or the wrong one, and have actually chosen the right. A greater opportunity will come after the Congressional elections next autumn. If the probable Democratic majority in Congress shall refrain from convincing the people that, however bad the Republican party is, the Democratic party can promise only worse, there will be a fine opening for any reasonably qualified Democratic candidate.

We cordially endorse President Taft's assertion, in the *McClure's Magazine* interview, that "the chief interest of the public in a tariff is as to whether it raises or lowers the cost of the necessaries of life." This plain statement of the case is not the less useful in that it repudiates the time-worn arguments with which the protectionist campaigns of 1888 and 1890 made the country familiar. President Harrison's contemptuous reference to the "cheap man inside the cheap coat," and the constant appeal to the hypothesis that high prices must mean high wages, not to mention high profits, and that therefore we ought gladly to submit to taxation for the purpose, may fairly be considered to-day as discarded arguments. This is a distinct gain in common sense, as is also the discarding of the extraordinary theory, urged by Mr. McKinley in defence of his own tariff bill of twenty years ago, that in some mysterious and occult way, "the foreigner pays the tariff tax."

The figures, however—cited by the President as proof that the tariff revision of 1909 was downward—do not appear to us convincing. The average rate of duty paid on all imported articles, since the enactment of the Payne bill, is stated to have been 12 per cent. below the average in the same months of the four preceding years. But such comparisons are not only vitally affected by an increase, for reasons peculiar to a season's trade, in imports which were not and are not taxed at all, but they depend on the movement of the various dutiable imports in relation to one another. The McKinley tariff of 1890, for example, increased import duties heavily, by the admission both of its advocates and its enemies. Yet the ratio between total import trade and duties collected from it, which had been 29.12 per cent. in the twelve months preceding the enactment of the new tariff schedules, was only 25.25 per cent. in the next twelve months, and 21.26 per cent. in the next. A question of this sort can be properly settled only by examination of the schedules themselves, with a view always to those articles in which increased taxation of the imports inevitably leads to higher prices paid by the consumer. This test has been utterly destructive to the claim of "revision downward," from the moment when the independent Republicans in Congress applied it to the schedules then under debate, to the present moment when every thrifty housewife in the country is unconsciously applying it.

Collector Loeb could have done nothing to show more conclusively his determination to execute the law than what he effected by the rigorous application of the customs laws to ex-Gov. Rollins of New Hampshire. Not to flinch from inflicting humiliation upon a prominent man, in such a matter, is as exceptional as it is praiseworthy. There is always the argument, with which officials may salve their conscience, that the person in question has done no worse than thousands of others who have suffered no punishment. But the only way to get the law respected is to punish when you can; and this one act of the Government will do more than a thousand denunciations or warnings to prevent others from breaking the law. Along with the serious aspect of the matter there goes one which is distinctly comical. Here is a prominent high-tariff politician, a man who enthusiastically votes to compel eighty million Americans who stay at home to pay a considerable part of their income in the shape of high prices for the great cause of protecting home industries; and he comes back from a pleasure trip not only laden with thousands of dollars' worth of the dangerous foreign stuff, but trying to escape the payment of the duty by concealing it from the customs officers. Is it not to laugh?

The equipment of the speedy turbine liners Harvard and Yale with oil-burning apparatus, doing away with the use of coal, is a highly interesting development in marine engineering. More and more, on the Pacific Coast, shipping men are turning to this form of fuel, not only because it eliminates the horrors of the stoke-hole and dispenses with all but a few of the engine-room force, but because it increases the efficiency of the ship by from 5 to 8 per cent. At least this is the estimate of a well-informed writer in *Out West;* the avoidance of the necessity of drawing fires, and the steady, even heat of the liquid fuel are the prime reasons for the gain. For the passengers the advantage in comfort is very great, and the loading of fuel on the Harvard and Yale takes now an hour of pumping in place of eight hours of exhausting labor in transferring coal from barges to the ship. Oil stows, too, in about 61 per cent. of the space of coal, ton for ton, and, more than that,

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the ton of oil is as efficient as two of coal. The cost of oil is, if anything, a little higher than that of coal in bulk, but the saving of labor more than offsets this.

The fight against the middleman, whom most people hold responsible for the high food prices, has begun in earnest. The farmers who organized the American Coöperative Union in St. Louis a few days ago have announced their intention of opening branches in every large city in the country, with the view of eliminating middlemen in the sale of farm products. In some European countries direct purchase from the farmer has already made considerable progress, thanks to the existence of a cheap parcels post. Consul-General Robert P. Skinner writes that in Hamburg thousands of families receive their daily pot of fresh butter from the parcels postman. The Mecklenburg farmer visits the city once a year to find customers, and returns to his home with the knowledge that his trade will be served just as carefully by the parcels post as though he were established in the heart of the city. Here we have to rely on the express companies; but outrageously high though express charges are, not a few families in this city have found that they can in this way get butter and eggs and poultry and vegetables as cheaply as at the corner grocery or butcher-shop, and usually in a much fresher and more palatable condition.

The death of John A. Kasson removes one of the last, if not the last, of the men who held high office in Washington under Lincoln. More than that, it takes away a faithful, high-minded servant of the Government in various useful capacities. From 1858 to 1860 Chairman of the Iowa Republican State Committee, he played a leading part in the drafting of the party's platform in the convention of 1860 which nominated Lincoln. Long a member of the Iowa Legislature, his varied career included, prior to 1881, two terms in Congress and four years as Minister to Austria. After two more terms in Congress he reentered the diplomatic service as a most acceptable Minister to Germany by appointment of President Arthur, distinguishing himself while in Berlin by his usefulness as American delegate to the Congo Conference. In 1887 and 1888 Mr. Kasson honorably represented the United States as chairman of the United States delegates to the Samoan Conference held in Berlin. His greater service was, however, as special commissioner plenipotentiary to negotiate reciprocity treaties. Under this roving commission he obtained treaties with France, England, the Argentine Republic, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and other nations during the years from 1897 to 1901. But the stupidity and indifference of Congress made these labors come to naught, Mr. Kasson finally resigning in protest. In 1898 Mr. Kasson was also a member of the American-Canadian Joint High Commission. Dignified, courteous, admirably equipped by tastes, training, and abilities for public service, Mr. Kasson was ever a rebuke to those politicians who believe that anybody can be a diplomat, and to those pessimists who used to believe that the United States could produce no diplomats to match the long-trained representatives of foreign lands.

President Butler came very close to the truth in what he told the Lake Mohonk Peace Conference:

> I am one of those who look for the simplest motives in explanation of action or of conduct. My impression is that somebody makes something by reason of the huge expenditures in preparation for war. Have you ever noticed that about the time that the appropriations for military purposes are under consideration in Congress, in the House of Commons, in the Chamber of Deputies, or in the Reichstag, or just before such a time, hostilities are always on the point of breaking out in two or three parts of the world at once?

It would be a pretty dull reader of the newspapers who had not noticed this remarkable law of nature, or had not occasionally risen to the suspicion that somebody was making something out of preaching war. War is one of the glorious, inevitable things behind which skulk a host of mean motives. War means the march of national destiny, war means the inevitable swing of history, war means peace with honor, and many other noble phrases. Alas! war too often means the march of the ammunition manufacturer and the swing of the beef-packer's purse. War means the demagogue's thirst for an issue, and the jingo editor's hunger for sensation, and the young lieutenant's longing for promotion, and the gun-captain's longing to show what he can do with his new twelve-inch rifle.

Preparation of an annual index to one or several metropolitan daily newspapers, which is suggested in an article in the journal of the Special Libraries Association, is a work which the American Library Association, or the Library of Congress, might well take up, and by so doing fill a great need. The writer, Paul P. Foster, makes his plea in behalf of the editorial library and the journalist, but such a work of reference would be of real value to thousands, and the wonder is that there is none. Publication of the index to the New York *Tribune* was discontinued in 1906, and since then consultation of newspaper files has been a haphazard grubbing, in which only zeal and time could insure success. The carefully prepared index to the London *Times*, issued in monthly parts and in annual volumes, and listing every article, item, or name which appears in its columns, offers a convenient model which the compiler here might follow.

The magnificent addition that is now to be made to the resources of the Princeton graduate school may bring to a settlement the questions that were the cause of such intense controversy a few months ago. Precisely what these questions were never became quite clear to the outside world. To President Wilson's mind there was evidently contained in the dispute an issue of fundamental importance—one involving no less a question than that of the preservation at Princeton of ideals vital in a democracy. But it is to be hoped that the passage of time has resulted in a better understanding and that the great bequest of Mr. Wyman may be made the basis of a development at Princeton which will be recognized by all Americans as a welcome addition to the country's resources in the field of the higher education.

That our cheap magazines are doing some good work, few persons will deny. That along with the good work there is a great deal of matter that is unwholesome either through exaggeration or one-sidedness or an hysterical method of presentation, is an assertion that may be made with as little danger of successful challenge. Yet no less competent a critic than Mr. William Archer, writing in the *Fortnightly Review*, gives to the "uplift" work of these magazines praise that is not only extremely high,

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but quite unqualified. Speaking of a certain article (with which we are not familiar) he designates it as "a picture every line of which was evidently the result of patient, penetrating investigation, and intimate personal knowledge"; and he gives like praise to an "equally masterly study" by the same hand—which has, in point of fact, by no means stood the test of subsequent examination and criticism. And speaking of the whole genus, he declares that "the sincerity and sobriety with which difficult topics are handled—the adherence to essential fact and avoidance of lurid and 'picturesque' detail—are beyond praise." Such laudation from over-sea must be very delightful to the ears of the "muck-raking" magazinists, but the description would hardly be recognized at home as everywhere applicable.

The Senate at Albany, on second consideration, has reversed its vote on the bill to provide a bond issue of $2,500,000 to make possible the acceptance of the Harriman and other gifts offered to the people of New York State. Failure to accept this wonderful gift would have been a monumental piece of stupidity. The Palisades Park, upon which the joint New York and New Jersey Commission has been working zealously for ten years without remuneration, already stretched well up the Hudson River, nearly to Hook Mountain. As now completed it extends to Newburgh, thus maintaining intact some of the finest scenery of the Hudson and ending such vandalism as has been going on in the stone quarries of Hook Mountain and elsewhere. It will result in the removal of the new State's Prison just under way below West Point. It happens, moreover, that there is not a single large private industry or settlement to interfere with the development of this park, which bids fair to pay for itself to a considerable degree by the sale of cuttings from its splendid forests. These are now a part of the State Forest Reservation. It is an extraordinary fact that so wild and untouched a tract of land, and one full of historic associations, can be found within so short a distance of a metropolis. As Gov. Hughes wrote to Mrs. Harriman: "Great as will be the pleasure of the people at the announcement of your gift, I am sure that in the years to come there will be a constantly growing appreciation of its importance to the State, and of the liberal disposition and far-sightedness that prompted it."

Monday's debate in the Senate, on the appropriation of $25,000,000 for two new Dreadnoughts, served to elicit, so the dispatches inform us, "two historical revelations by Senator Depew." Historical revelations are read with eagerness in these days; but of these two contributions by Mr. Depew we are compelled to say that one of them reveals nothing which was not known by every well-informed man beforehand, and that the other reveals something which never happened. The first has to do with President McKinley's attitude towards the Spanish War, concerning which Mr. Depew declared that he "knew of his own knowledge" that Spain was prepared to abandon Cuba and Porto Rico if she could be assured in advance of the acceptance of her offer. The facts in this regard have been repeatedly set forth in our columns; they have been summed up by Rear-Admiral Chadwick in his recent work on the diplomatic relations of the United States and Spain. On April 10, 1898, Minister Woodford cabled from Madrid to Washington the news of the Spanish Government's assent to all the American demands, adding:

> I hope that nothing will now be done to humiliate Spain, as I am satisfied that the present government is going, and is loyally ready to go, as fast and as far as it can.

On April 11, one day later, President McKinley sent to Congress a message ending thus:

> The issue is now with Congress. It is a solemn responsibility. I have exhausted every effort to relieve the intolerable condition of affairs which is at our doors. Prepared to execute every obligation imposed upon me by the Constitution and the law, I await your action.

The Senator's other "revelation" was ascribed to an "intimate friend" who had imparted this information regarding the Venezuela episode of 1895:

> When the President's message was promulgated, Lord Salisbury said to him: "I believe that on account of the rancor coming down from the Revolutionary war, and accentuated by certain occurrences in the civil war, America means to have a war with Great Britain at some time, and I believe now is the best time, when America has no navy." The views of the prime minister were overruled by Queen Victoria, but if Lord Salisbury had had the power possessed by some of the English prime ministers, the issue certainly would have been tried out.

Without disparagement of the "intimate friend," we are constrained to call attention to the position of international affairs at the hour when this remarkable clash between the Queen and Lord Salisbury must be supposed to have occurred. It was an hour when England's diplomatic isolation was such as has not been witnessed at any other period in our time. France, as the subsequent Fashoda episode demonstrated, was watching England jealously. What the popular and official feeling was in Germany, the incident of the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, four or five weeks after the Venezuela message, proved unmistakably. Russia had not forgotten 1877 and 1885. The notion, then, that an experienced English statesman was at that very moment contemplating lightheartedly collision with the United States, hardly does credit to the "intimate friend."

The sentencing of the president of the Russian Duma and of one of the principal members of that body to a term of imprisonment for participating in a duel emphasizes the disrepute which attaches in Russia to murder, or attempted murder, on a small scale. Either it is that, or else it is a case of reserving certain sports for the exclusive enjoyment of the Czar and his government, just as hunting the stag in mediæval England was reserved for the exclusive enjoyment of the King. If Halley's comet is at all interested in the recent progress of affairs in Russia, it will carry with it into stellar space the somewhat mixed impression of a great country where it is wrong to fight a duel, but where it is proper for the government to organize the wholesale murder of women and children; a country where the Czar's peace must not be infringed upon, not though thousands must be sent to the gallows by judges in whom expedition tempers justice. At the present moment Jewish families are being expelled by the hundred from Kieff and other Russian cities outside of the Pale. The fugitives must either emigrate or go to swell the mass of existing poverty in the overcrowded cities of western Russia. It means a vast amount of suffering, but it is permissible in Russia precisely because it is suffering on a large scale.

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A DEFENCE THAT PROVES TOO MUCH.

When Mr. Taft last week gave out his explanation of the Ballinger-Lawler-Wickersham affair, we made the obvious remark that if a frank statement of the facts had been promptly made when the question was first raised, "nine-tenths of the pain and humiliation attending this disagreeable episode would have been avoided." But we felt it our duty to point out that, great as had been the aggravation of the trouble caused by this delay, the original facts connected with Mr. Taft's letter of exoneration were such as to justify severe criticism. We have observed that a large number of perfectly well-meaning and usually intelligent newspapers have taken the view that the President and his advisers committed an extraordinary and deplorable blunder in their policy of silence, but that in the facts themselves there was nothing whatever to regret or to censure. The antedating of Mr. Wickersham's summary and opinion, the delegation to Ballinger's subordinate of the task of preparing the case for the President, the failure to mention this detailed digest of the case as among the documents before the President when he took action, the arrival at his practical decision after only a few hours' work on an enormous mass of complex and confusing documentary material—all this was perfectly blameless and a mere matter of course; the only thing censurable was that the President, or somebody for him, did not immediately let the public know all these facts, the entire propriety of which the public would at once have recognized.

It does not seem to have occurred to any of our esteemed contemporaries who take this view of the case that it carries with it a conclusion of a most startling character. It is one thing to blunder or to use bad judgment, it is another thing to act like an imbecile. Mr. Taft, Mr. Wickersham, Mr. Ballinger, Mr. Lawler, are all of them gentlemen who have managed through long professional careers to perform duties of considerable difficulty, to attend to business of considerable importance. Now men in full possession of normal intellectual faculties do not adopt a policy of denial and evasion and obstruction to avoid producing matter which could carry with it no blame. No one man does this; four men consulting together, or having the opportunity of consulting together, certainly do not persist in such a course, week after week, month after month, without a motive. Confronted, therefore, with the alternative of adjudging these gentlemen to be utter incompetents or of inferring that there was something censurable in the matters that they were concealing, we for our part should feel strictly compelled to adopt the latter alternative, even if we had no other light upon the facts.

But the conclusion thus inevitably drawn from the first principles of human nature is amply evident on the face of the facts themselves. As we have said before, we are fully persuaded that the President believed he was doing justice in the case; but that consideration cannot justify us in suppressing the truth as to what he actually did. He received from Mr. Ballinger and Mr. Lawler, calling on him in person at Beverly, a mass of typewritten documents containing several hundred thousand words and relating to matters of great intricacy. They arrived with these documents on a Monday evening. That same night, according to his own statement, after staying up until three o'clock, he arrived at the conclusion that the charges against Ballinger were wholly unfounded. On the following day, Tuesday, he was busy in other ways, and in the evening he had a second talk with Ballinger and Lawler, and commissioned Lawler to draw up a letter as from himself, the President. This letter has now appeared in full in the report of the proceedings of the committee. It comprises, besides the expression of opinion, a detailed digest of all the evidence, made entirely from Mr. Ballinger's standpoint. Attorney-General Wickersham brought this document to Beverly, and had not seen either the full records or the President until the morning of Sunday, the 12th. On the next day, the 13th, Mr. Taft wrote the letter completely exonerating Ballinger and authorizing the dismissal of Glavis. Three months later the Senate requested the President to transmit to it "any reports, statements, papers, or documents upon which he acted in reaching his conclusions." Among the documents transmitted by the President in response to this request was an elaborate summary and opinion by the Attorney-General, filling seventy-four large pages of printed matter and dated September 11—a document which the President did not have before him and which it was manifestly impossible for the Attorney-General to have produced or even to have roughly indicated, in the time at his disposal. And among the documents was *not* included the minute and laboriously constructed digest of Ballinger's subordinate, Lawler, prepared at the President's own request, which must inevitably have formed an important element in his disposition of the case.

There is no mystery, therefore, why all parties concerned should have desired the facts to remain secret. These facts were damaging. They were calculated, on the one hand, to deprive Mr. Ballinger of the benefit that had come to him from the President's favorable verdict, by vastly lessening the weight of that verdict with the country. And they were calculated also to do an injury to the President's own standing. Ill-judged as was the policy of delay and obstruction, it was not idiotic; it was not without a motive. The bad judgment consisted not in thinking that it would be well for all parties concerned if the facts were suppressed, but in imagining that it would be possible permanently to suppress them. That there was no bad intention on the President's part we sincerely believe. But neither regard for his good intentions nor concern for the dignity of his great office would justify us in helping to pass off upon the American people, in place of the truth, a view of the affair the inherent absurdity of which is no less patent than its disagreement with the facts.

RAILWAYS AND THEIR PATRONS.

Throughout the prolonged discussion of the pending Railway bill in Congress there has been manifest a determination, by a large and apparently controlling element of the Congressmen of both political parties, not to relax, directly or indirectly, such barriers as already exist against arbitrary rate-making. The comment of the railways on this attitude has been generally to the effect that an unreasoning hostility has been created against one of our greatest industries. And more particularly, it has been asked why the railways should not possess unchallenged the right, which smaller industries assert and ex-

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ercise, of adjusting their business arrangements to changing financial conditions. Why, for instance, if the price of grain and cotton and iron and meat and rents has been rising rapidly and continuously, should not the price of railway transportation rise proportionately, and why should not the railway managers, like the farmers and manufacturers and graziers and landlords, be the judges as to what increase the circumstances of their business require? These have at all times been fair questions, and certain recent events may help in giving a fair answer.

A few weeks ago, there was filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission notice of what appeared to be a concerted advance of 10 to 20 per cent. in freight rates on the Western railways, and it was intimated that the Eastern railways would follow suit. In public statements several railway managers averred that, having granted substantial increase in wages to their employees, they were forced to recoup themselves by higher transportation charges. One railway president, Mr. Brown of the New York Central, went so far as to assert that "if the railways are to remain solvent, the only recourse now is an advance in freight rates." To these arguments the association of Western shippers rejoined, first, that the railways had very lately assured them that no general advance in rates was contemplated; secondly, that the progressive increase in railway earnings has been much more than enough to cover the higher wage payments. It was elsewhere pointed out that the proposed advance in rates was on the average much greater than the advance in wages, and that, in the face of their gloomy statement of the situation, the railways, including that over which Mr. Brown presides, were increasing dividends, even where the rate was already high.

In the past week or two, there has also been announced in behalf of the railways which conduct the suburban passenger traffic of this city, a seemingly concerted increase of commutation rates, averaging something like 10 per cent. A commuters' committee of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford called on the president of that road, last Friday, to remonstrate. Mr. Mellen, according to the newspaper reports, responded thus in regard to suburban passenger traffic:

> We pay out 5 cents more than we receive. I haven't asked you for anything. We lose on you. We carry you into New York for nothing and our blessing. We are not trying to rob you.

And in regard to the protest of one town upon his line, he added:

> The more you do at New Rochelle, the more you prosper, the worse off we are.

Now it is not our purpose here to dispute the facts or figures produced in their own behalf by the railway managers. But what the two incidents seem to us to prove is the entire reasonableness, under existing circumstances, of the public's insistence on a tribunal, higher than either the railway managers or the shipping and travelling public, with full and complete authority to pass on the justice or injustice of such increased charges. Mr. Mellen's attitude shows clearly the necessity for such supervision. It is not a novel attitude. Commuters on an important New Jersey railway will recall a similar incident, as much as twenty-five years ago, when a committee of passengers were informed by the president of the road that he "would rather carry dead hogs than live ones." The result was the extension to that district of a rival railway which apparently held other views regarding the profitableness of suburban traffic. Thereupon, instead of cheerfully bidding its rival godspeed, and urging commuters to patronize it, the railway with a leaning towards dead freight proceeded instantly to improve its own facilities, reduce its commutation rates, and invite fresh patronage. It was perfectly well aware that it could not afford to lose this patronage, with the profitable freight traffic which came to it from the building-up of a prosperous suburban community.

It is conceivable that it may then have cost as much to haul a fast suburban express to this city as was collected from the fares of commuters on the train. But no railway man was quite so simple as to argue seriously that his road got no compensation elsewhere. But this was not then, and is not now, the end of the matter. A railway is not in the same position as a merchant, for example, in fixing arbitrarily its charge for what it produces. If the merchant names an unjust price, his customers will go elsewhere to buy. The case with the railway is that the customer has nowhere else to go. Thanks to the franchise, the right of way, and the facility for concerted action, the railway enjoys a power not far from monopoly. Two or three decades ago, it was commonly answered to this argument that if the commuter, in the case supposed, felt seriously aggrieved, he could move to another town—if, indeed, his own town did not happen to enjoy the facilities of an energetic competing railway.

But the essential fact about the present advance in rates, to Western shippers as to Eastern commuters, is that all the railways appear to act in concert. For better or for worse, competition in rates has virtually become a thing of the past. This situation is recognized by the public, and is the real cause both of the organization of the shippers and of the vigilant, if not hostile, attitude of Congress. For it is quite impossible to ignore that such an argument as Mr. Mellen's has far wider scope than a 10 per cent. increase in rates. If 10 per cent. is claimed, simply because one branch of traffic is not profitable enough, then why not 20 per cent., or 30? So long as all competing railways acted together, the shipping and travelling public would be equally at their mercy, subject always to governmental intervention.

We say nothing of what many people describe as the astonishing lack of wisdom in projecting these higher railway charges on the public at the very moment when the fate of a railway restriction bill hung in the Congressional balance. What impresses us far more forcibly is the blindness of many railway managers in their obstinate struggle against the committing of broad supervisory powers in these matters to Federal commerce commissions and public service commissions in the States. That the Government will intervene to safeguard its citizens against injustice which is indisputably possible, may be taken for granted. But one cannot help wondering whether sweeping and drastic rate provisions, in a single set of statutes, would be deemed more satisfactory by the railway managers than the entrusting of the whole question to a body of conservative officers, with instructions to consider, in the light of all the circumstances, each general change in rates and the case of each individual railway.

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AN IMPORTANT BILL HASTILY PASSED.

It is difficult to find a respectable excuse for the action of the House of Representatives on Monday of last week, in rushing through, under a suspension of the rules, a bill of extremely important character affecting the entire penal system of the United States. Mr. Parker of New Jersey, chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, moved "to suspend the rules and pass the bill (§ 870) to parole United States prisoners, and for other purposes, as amended." Strong objection to the railroading of the bill was at once raised by Mr. Mann of Illinois. The report on the bill, he stated, had been made only on Saturday, and it had reached him and other members only on Monday. He had not had time to look at it. "Does not the gentleman from New Jersey," he asked, "think it is rushing business to try and pass an important matter like this without an opportunity to read the report and consider it?" Mr. Parker replied that the bill had been most carefully considered in committee, that there had been ample and thorough hearings, and that it had been unanimously reported by the committee. After a haphazard debate, in which a total of twenty minutes was allowed to each side, the bill was passed. The division, which was called for by Mr. Mann, showed 56 ayes and 18 noes, a total of 74 votes, the full membership of the House being 391. Thus after a random debate of forty minutes, and a vote in which less than one-fifth of its membership took part, this great change in the penal system of the United States was adopted by the House of Representatives.

The bill provides—

> That every prisoner who has been or may hereafter be convicted of any offence against the United States, and is confined, in execution of the judgment of such conviction, in any United States or State penitentiary or prison for a term of more than one year, other than for life, except when convicted of murder in the first degree, rape, or incest, and except those who have previously served a term of imprisonment of at least one year in any penal institution in the United States, may be released on parole as hereafter provided.

Application for parole can be made only after one-third of the term of the sentence has been served; the board of parole is to be composed of three persons—"the superintendent of prisons of the Department of Justice, the United States district judge for, and a citizen living in, the district in which the penitentiary is located, the latter to be appointed by the Attorney-General." The members of the board are to serve without compensation; a majority of the board (*i. e.*, two members) are to be a quorum sufficient for the transaction of business. The board is to meet at stated times to consider applications for parole. At such meetings, it "shall receive and consider recommendations, and if it shall appear to the board that there is reasonable probability that any prisoner who applies for his parole, if the same is granted, will not violate any law, and if in the opinion of the board such release is not incompatible with the welfare of society, then the board may authorize the release of said applicant upon parole." And the nature and effect of the paroling, when granted, are set forth in detail in the bill.

Now we are far from saying that the bill is without merit. The parole system is eminently desirable in the case of all minor offences, and in a large proportion of all first offences, even of a more serious character. But there is grave doubt whether it ought to be made to apply, as does this bill, to all crimes except the three specifically named as exceptions; and, apart from this fundamental question, the plan upon which the system should be administered in the case of the Federal Government, as distinguished from local jurisdictions, raises questions that demand careful consideration and discussion. Instead of such discussion, all that the House heard from the advocates of the bill were some vague generalities as to its mercy and humanity, some broad assertions of the benefit of the parole system in general, and—strangely incongruous with these—a plea for the bill on the score of the saving of government money that would result from the freeing of the prisoners. Mr. Mann put the case plainly when he said:

> Here is a very important proposition—two bills relating to the same subject, both reported back by the Judiciary Committee, striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting a new provision, and then they propose to pass the bill through the House without consideration under suspention of the rules, when certainly this bill is of a character that ought to be considered under the privilege of amendment.

Mr. Hughes of New Jersey, protesting against the railroading of the bill, asserted his entire approval of the New Jersey parole system, but declared that the bill under consideration was of a very different character from the New Jersey law. "There has been nothing in this discussion," he said, "and there is nothing that any man of ordinary intelligence can discover by a hasty examination, which would appeal to him to cause him to resolve his doubts in favor of passing this important legislation at this time. I propose to vote against the bill because I have not had sufficient time to examine it."

Among the crimes with which the penal laws of the United States deal, there is one class to which the usual arguments in favor of the indeterminate sentence and the parole system are singularly inapplicable. Such crimes as bank-wrecking, systematic defrauding of the government, or criminal financial operations generally, are committed by men not because they have never had an opportunity for self-development, nor because they have never acquired habits of order or of regular work. And when these men are put in prison, the object of the law is not at all—certainly not in any significant degree—to prevent a repetition of the same or a similar crime by the same person. Such a man finds no difficulty in being the most exemplary of prisoners; he needs no prison discipline to make him polite, neat in his person, punctual in his daily tasks, efficient in the dispatch of work. Whether his sentence should be a year or six years or twenty years is a question the true answer to which depends not on the facts developed during his prison life, but on the facts brought before judge and jury at his trial. He suffers in prison for one purpose, and one purpose only—that knowledge of the dire punishment which society thinks it necessary to impose for his crime may prevent others from committing it. To confuse his case with that of the shiftless or hopeless fellow who falls into the clutches of the law through the commission of some petty crime is to lose sight of the sole weighty purpose of the law in this most important domain. And before deciding upon so radical a change, it were well that the House of Representatives should devote to its consideration something more than can be got out of forty minutes of impromptu debate.

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ENGLAND AND THE PEACE OF EUROPE.

Strong insistence has been laid upon the services of Edward VII in the cause of peace, and speculation will now be asking whether a new reign in England may be expected to bring about a change for the worse. The question must have presented itself with dramatic force to a great many people when George V and William II knelt beside the coffin of Edward the Peacemaker. But probably not many of these reflected that, in the sharpest menace to the peace of the world, the services of the late King are not as irreplaceable as may appear at first thought. The case is rather paradoxical. It is admitted that Edward VII was zealous in behalf of European peace. It is admittted that in the hostility between Great Britain and Germany lies the greatest danger of a European conflict. And it is a matter of record that during Edward's reign, Anglo-German relations grew in bitterness with the years. If Edward, ascending the throne when England was still under the cloud of the Boer war, had asked himself, What must I do to insure peace for England and for Europe? the answer must have been, Bring England and Germany into friendship. This solution he did not attain.

Apart from Germany, England's relations with the Continent during the reign of Edward VII took the form of an extraordinary succession of friendships and ententes, of which the cornerstone was the understanding with France, later expanded into a Triple Entente by the adhesion of Russia. With France virtually an ally, with Russia as the ally of an ally and a pledged friend, with Italy and Spain won over to closer friendship than ever, here was indeed an imposing record for the monarch who was understood to have taken a very active part in the framing of British foreign policy. And yet it should seem at first that for all those generous new bonds of amity, the cause of peace had not been measurably advanced. At no time was England in danger of going to war with France or Spain or Italy or even with Russia. If England made friends, it was with those who were already inclined to be friendly or, in any case, in no near danger of becoming enemies. Whereas, by rousing German fears or German anger, this policy of friendships and alliances may be said actually to have accentuated the perils of the general European situation. It was to test the strength of the Anglo-French understanding that Germany brought on the Morocco crisis. It was as a reply to the Triple Entente of Great Britain, France, and Russia that Austria and Germany broke with the Treaty of Berlin by the seizure of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Moroccan incident illustrates the difficulty of apportioning precisely the rights and wrongs in a complicated situation. Coming within a year after the conclusion of the Anglo-French entente, it was cited as a justification on both sides. Frenchmen congratulated themselves on the possession, in England, of an ally whose pledge of support saved the Third Republic from humiliation at the hands of Germany. But Germany argued that if France had refrained from entering into a menacing alliance with England, there would have been no occasion for the rattling of the German sabre. Common sense decides that France was right in seeking to insure her safety by means of powerful friendships abroad, instead of depending upon the forbearance of Germany. Common-sense, that is, agrees that on the whole the Anglo-French understanding has worked for the peace of Europe. And Edward VII, as one of the authors of that understanding, merited the reputation of peacemaker he enjoyed.

Yet it would be misjudging the proportion of things to overlook the fact that the final cause behind the Anglo-French entente was to be found in France rather than in England. For years the Frenchman Delcassé had been at work on his scheme of a great anti-German alliance. Its motive may have been the impossible one of revenge for 1870-71, but in principle it recognized that, single-handed, France could not hope to hold her own against Germany. The same principle was recognized by those who were opposed to Delcassé's adventurous policy. Whether war with Germany was to be risked or not, Frenchmen had grown reconciled to the fact that their country must henceforth play a secondary rôle in the politics of Europe, that her prestige and her safety demanded an ally. The question then was who that ally should be—Germany or England. The question had only to be asked to be answered. The year 1870-71 is still a bitter memory in France. In spite of Fashoda, it was England to whom the French people turned.

Prominent, therefore, though the late King's share undeniably was in the cementing of England's recent friendships, the prime impelling force lay outside himself, in the general condition of European politics. His pacific disposition, his tact, his wide knowledge of men, his geniality of temper, supplied an added impetus, but, after all, a subsidiary one. But since the forces that ultimately shaped British foreign policy lay outside the personality of the monarch, it follows that no great changes are likely to occur with the succession of George V. France needs English friendship now as she did five years ago, and English interests point to a good understanding with France as they did five years ago. There is no reason why George should be less a monarch of peace than his father was. And if he succeeds in bringing about a better understanding between England and Germany, he will have done a greater work than his father did.

PHYSICAL TRAINING IN COLLEGE.

In a recent report on physical development among undergraduates, by the director of the Yale University gymnasium, the apologetic note is distinctly present. Athletic directors have been on the defensive before this, but they have seldom been called upon to prove that physical training is good for the—body. Yet that is what the elaborate report in the *Yale Alumni Weekly* sets out to do. It attempts to explain the striking fact, as most people will find it, that, between his freshman year and his senior year, the undergraduate shows no appreciable improvement so far as may be judged by outward physical manifestations. The records show that in height, weight, and muscular development the freshman average and the senior average are virtually the same; in lung development there is a slight increase after four years. On the whole, the Yale figures indicate a sharp lack of correlation between physical exercise and physical growth, and all the more when it is recalled that 88 per cent. of Yale men are reported as taking part in some form of major athletics in addition to their gymnasium work.

The explanation brought forward by

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the Yale writer is a novel one, though we have not the least ground for questioning its sufficiency. He points out that the period between seventeen or eighteen years and twenty-two or twenty-three years in men is a period of arrested development and often of actual retrogression. For a college man merely to hold his own is, consequently, something; and a gain, however slight, proves the efficacy of physical culture. For encouragement, we may look at the measurement figures of fifty and forty years ago, which show that the present-day undergraduate is physically a much better man than his father or grandfather was at his age. We find the stronger argument, however, in a plain appeal to common sense. One need not be a believer in all the miraculous benefits that are so often claimed for athletics, in order to feel that a fair amount of good cannot help coming from physical exercise. The Yale director's figures almost prove too much. They concede what the most fervent opponent of muscle-worship in the colleges would scarcely venture to claim.

But there is another argument which the Yale writer has failed to make use of, although it is one that enters into almost every discussion on the subject. Not height or weight or chest-girth or breathing capacity is the sole test of ultimate physical capacity. There is that mysterious element called staying-power on the athletic field and vitality in the sick-bed, which often differentiates so sharply two men of the same build and the same apparent organic equipment. In the long run, of course, the man with the deeper chest and firmer muscles will be the healthier man; but nevertheless, it is open to the athletic director to claim that his college boys get something out of their training that cannot be measured in inches, linear or cubic. Sand, grit, pluck, or whatever the latest name may be for it, undoubtedly plays a part in the general problem of health and survival as it does in the solution of isolated problems. At least, that is the way we should have commented upon the *Alumni Weekly's* figures instead of contenting ourselves with proving that the college man is no worse off physically than the young man who does not go in for athletics to-day, and better than the young man who did not go in for athletics forty years ago.

And yet, when all is said and done, if the Yale statistics hold good for all American colleges, here is something to strengthen the hands of men like President Lowell, who, in an age gone mad with athletics, have ventured to raise their voice in behalf of that virtue which once upon a time used to find a place within university walls, namely, scholarship. It required courage to raised the plea. For some time it had become the fashion to argue that it was absurd to decry athletics, since it was a well-known fact that the best athletes in the college were as a rule among the best scholars. It really was not a well-known fact. Common experience and common sense all pointed the other way. But the bold repetition of an obvious falsehood is always impressive. The paradox appealed; and we were really in danger of turning to the football field and the diamond for our future stars in scholarship, until some very relevant and very illuminating statistics on this point were put out, a few months ago, at Harvard. The Harvard figures disposed with neatness and dispatch of the paradox that the hardest workers are those who do not work. The athlete who found no time for study as an undergraduate made no particularly happy showing in the professional schools, and the undergraduate who was faithful to his work did. If athleticism was to be justified at all, it was within its own domain of the physical.

And now come the Yale figures to indicate that even in the domain of the physical, athleticism, with its vast and costly machinery, works results totally out of proportion to the expenditure of money, time, effort, and interest. We say "indicate" and not "show" because, as we have already stated, we believe the Yale figures prove too much. We feel that athletics must do good, and actually do so. We find the only value of the Yale figures—though a very high value it is—in proving the disproportion between the zeal and clamor that go into athletics and the result. The figures do not convince us that football and rowing produce no favorable effect on the college man's physical development. They do support the conviction that such good as football, rowing, and all the other college sports accomplish, might be attained at a much smaller sacrifice of the things colleges were once upon a time supposed to stand for.

THE LOST ART OF SKETCHING.

The extension of the professional point of view, with all the contempt for the amateur which it implies, has tended, in our day, to discourage every form of irregular application to the fine arts. The last few decades have seen a notable decline in promiscuous painting and piano playing. Those who possess, or think they possess, a real talent, pursue its cultivation farther than in the past—and not merely as an accomplishment, but with a more or less distinct professional end in view—while, on the other hand, those who are conscious of no such conspicuous gift, or who foresee no need to earn a living, are easily deterred from acquiring even the elements of those arts which may nevertheless appeal strongly to their taste, contenting themselves with such participation as may be enjoyed publicly in concert halls and picture galleries.

There was a time, in reality not long distant—though, like all things connected with our grandfathers and grandmothers, it seems more remote than antiquity—when every European traveller carried his sketch-book, just as he kept a journal of his literary impressions. But the professional spirit has long since, in large measure, suppressed both of these practices, even among our English cousins, who were peculiarly addicted to them. In one of his essays, George Moore, an exponent of this spirit, indulges in witty ridicule at the expense of art in the royal family, whose domestic tastes were an accurate reflection of the tastes of the nation as a whole. Here, as elsewhere, the critic's point of view is French rather than English. Gallic wit has traditionally found material in the tweed-suited English tourist, who sits on the highest rock in the landscape, and sketches away regardless of the attention he attracts, or of personal discomfort. Maupassant has a story of a wreck on the Breton coast, in which the life-savers who make their way through the surf to the hulk of an English ship hung up at a perilous angle on the rocks find, as the sole survivors, an elderly Englishman and his four daughters all seated in the wreck and absorbed in sketching the picturesque aspects of the disaster.

It is easy to smile at the young lady of the mid-Victorian period, with her album of sketches which, in the pages of the polite contemporary novelist, she

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is always being persuaded to exhibit to visitors. With what bashful hesitation does she accede to the reiterated requests, and with what real palpitations of pride does she eventually accept the glowing praises that are bestowed upon the skilful product of her pencil! But the camera fiend, rushing at express speed through foreign parts, and stopping every few feet to make hasty snapshots, lends himself as readily to ridicule as his predecessor, the sketching tourist, and is far less susceptible of a rational defence.

Surely, one purpose of foreign travel is to store the mind with impressions, visual images. But to gain a lasting impression or image of a place or object, it is necessary to look at it, to study it with some care, to analyze it, noting its peculiar structure and characteristics. Such study was required of even the most casual and untrained sketcher; with the camera it is quite different. The hastiest glance apprises the photographer that he has found a "subject"; he levels his little box, gazes at the finder, presses the button, and hurries on. His own eye has scarcely been involved in the operation, and to that of the camera has been deputed the task of mechanically assimilating each detail of the scene. To recall what he has seen he must have recourse to his album, which has thus become a kind of detached, impersonal, mechanical memory for him. Moreover, the very operation of the mechanism, simple as it is, serves still further to distract his attention at the moment when his eye rather than the lens should be carefully focussed upon the object, so that the camera may be said to encourage and complete that indolence and lax dispersion of mental and visual attitude which are so characteristic of the average American tourist.

Far from smiling, then, with a superior air at those stalwart Englishmen and angular Englishwomen who are still occasionally to be seen sitting before their easels in the blistering sun of southern Italy, or in a gondola in Venice glancing up from their notebooks, and with fixed gaze measuring some bit of garden wall with vertical pencil grasped firmly between thumb and forefinger—far from smiling at these, we entertain a profound and hearty admiration for them, and wish we could surprise more of our own compatriots in like occupations. For we feel convinced that they are getting something out of their peregrinations and *séjours* which we, with our snapshot methods, miss utterly. Viewed as art, their work may be faulty, indeed quite negligible. Certainly, a good photograph is a better thing in itself than a bad drawing, or water-color. But to the amateur himself a poor sketch (but his own!) has a deeper personal value than the most finished snapshot, his rôle in which has been far more passive than active.

And even the camera craze bids fair to be superseded by that for photographic postcards. Now that the traveller can get his choice of scenes ready-made in prodigal variety and at the most trifling expense, he is less likely than before to burden himself with a camera which cannot compete with the postcard maker. This very perfection of the process of acquiring "impressions" without effort or reflection may, however, tend to remedy the evil which, in the beginning, it tended to emphasize. What more likely than that a natural reaction, a swing of the pendulum in the other direction, should bring the sketch-book and pencil once more into vogue? The revival of these abused articles of the traveller's equipment might not lead to any great advance in our native art, but it would at least help to render us, as a nation, more acute and careful in our observation and make us better travellers.

SHERIDAN.

There are some characters that seem predestined to serve as the scapegoats of human frivolity. Upon them legend delights to pitch and empty the whole budget of folly which respectability is unwilling to own to in itself but is perfectly ready to chuckle at in others. Such to some extent appears to be the rôle of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. In this sense story and fable have made so free with his name that it is difficult to tell how much of the current conception of the man is fact and how much is fiction. Hitherto the general reader who would ravel out the skein of tradition, which seems to grow more complicated with every effort to extricate it, has had to rely for the truth upon the biographies of Percy Fitzgerald and Fraser Rae, both of which are unsatisfactory in many respects as finished likenesses. In comparison Mr. Sichel's new biography* has an advantage in measure and precision as well as in fulness.

On the whole, it is such manner of biography as Sainte-Beuve approves—"broad, copious, even diffuse at times." For a third or fourth gleaning it contains a good deal of new material. In several instances, too, Mr. Sichel is successful in mending or piecing out his predecessors' story. While, in addition, he has expanded some of Sheridan's speeches by a collation of reports, notably the amazing "Begum Speech" before the Commons—though it must be confessed that in this instance, as in some others, the attempted restoration begins to show signs of superfetation.

Indeed, it is just this excess of fact—this disposition to dilate the subject beyond his predecessors, which forms the most serious blemish of the book as a whole. There is hardly a sentence which does not suffer from a kind of diffraction of the attention. The author has had so many things in mind that he seldom succeeds in bringing a fact sharply to a focus or in illumining it distinctly without a fringe of outlying reference and allusion—to say nothing of the inundation of detail which has overflowed the text in a freshet of footnotes. Nor does all this luggage harmonize very well with the biographer's ambition to write a picturesque narrative. After all, biography is not romance; and the attempt to write the former in the taste of the latter is likely enough to spoil both.

In view, then, of all these more or less conflicting representations and particularly of a certain inchoateness and unwieldiness in Mr. Sichel's performance—his biography includes something like a thousand compactly printed pages—it may not be unpardonable to try to draw, from the data which the successive biographers have obligingly furnished, not so much a full-length portrait of the subject, as a mere head-and-shoulder sketch which may possibly gain in compactness and consistency what it is bound to lose in scope and detail.

I.

Sheridan is one of those rare amphibians who live partly in literature, partly in politics; who belong at once to the two elements of imagination and reality. This double *ménage* makes him, like Swift, who is in so far his counterpart, a rather difficult subject of criticism. He is not to be found wholly in his plays or in his speeches—in one sense it is questionable whether he is to be found in both together. He resides in a great measure outside of his professions. He has not a trace of Swift's deadly seriousness. He is at bottom a man of pleasure, to whom these occupations are but expedients—a means to live. In the incorrigible levity of his character, he is much like Sterne—only more effectual. His genius is largely an affair of animal spirits, so little does it

*"Sheridan: From New and Original Material, including a Manuscript Diary by Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire." By Walter Sichel. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co. 2 vols. $7.50 net.

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seem to do with the intellectual or the moral nature. It is impossible wholly to stifle the suspicion that he is amusing himself even with what purport to be his most earnest efforts.

Of such a character you can hardly expect the logical consequence of a fanatic, an idealogue, a man of principles like Burke—any more than you can expect of the stage the solid consistency of life. What stood him in the place of principle or even policy, it would sometimes seem, was a desire to strike the imagination. He was, above all, a social creature, the man of an audience. His first thought is of the play—the illusion, the stage effect. And what an effective, what a brilliant performance, it must have been! To know him at his best, it would be necessary to replace him in his original setting, to restore the situation, social and political, in all its intricate intrigue with its conflicting motives and cross purposes, to recall the vanished actors and set them wheeling again in their rounds of gayety and self-interest—the captivating Georgiana of Devonshire, the romantic Mrs. Crewe, the generous and profligate Fox, the tinsel "Florizel" of Carlton House, "first gentleman of Europe" and heir apparent to the throne of England. But the old comedy is long since played out to its foregone conclusion, and we are left to imagine as best we can the audacity and fascination of him who was one of its most striking and versatile performers.

And yet, though Sheridan realizes himself fully neither in literature nor in history, he is always oscillating between these two poles; he is constantly manifesting himself in one or the other of these two worlds—he is either the humorist, the man of fancy and invention, or else the statesman and manager, the man of affairs—ever a little too much of the former, no doubt, to make a complete success of the latter. And it is his instability—the unexpectedness with which he shifts his ground so that you never know just where to have him, the persistency with which the one character will be getting into the other's light—which makes him so interesting—and sometimes so unedifying.

It is frankly in the former capacity that he begins his career—with an elopement and two duels. About the whole affair there is something as paradoxical, as quizzical as any of his literary compositions. Whatever the feelings of the parties at the moment, whatever the bunglings of the fate that mislays our prettiest dénouements, his elopement is essentially a comic situation, which might serve as a pendant to the scene between Lady Teazle and Joseph Surface—an elopement in all the proprieties, with a duenna in waiting, wherein everything is saved but appearances. And with what waggishness the penniless lover, who is innocently masquerading as a friend to all concerned, hoodwinks his rival and contrives that some one else shall bear the expenses of the frolic! His whole genius is in it; for the future he has only to reduce himself to writing.

Nor does his later life belie the mingled jest and earnest of his beginnings. He is always living at loose ends himself, always in arrears, always behind time, his affairs in hopeless disorder, his letters unread, his appointments unmet; and yet he aspires to manage a theatre or two, to control a political party, to direct a prince, to carry out a national policy. In the general chaos of his existence he is always making shift, with incredible dexterity and presence of mind, to extricate himself from difficulties that would never have arisen in the first place without the grossest tardiness and negligence. He is admirably cool, good-humored, and resourceful. But his abilities are wasted on temporary expedients—to put off a dun or wheedle a tradesman or pass off an indiscretion. His was the dodge by which the public lie in denial of the Prince's marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert was accommodated and the lady sentimentally reimbursed for the loss of her character. Even in his moments of power he is restrained by some refinement of delicacy—a scruple that, however fine, seems more dramatic than political, and calculated rather to meet the needs of the literary imagination than of practical common sense—from securing the advantages for which he has been working all along. In a day of party—a system of things which the conscientious Burke himself defends at length—he had too much of the original about him to become a mere collaborator in other men's plots. He is incorruptible by his enemies, but he is equally intractable to his friends. Admirable exception as he is to the purchasable politicians of his time, his probity is largely sentimental. It never seems to have crossed his mind that, as society is constituted, the management of money is itself a branch of morals, and carelessness with one's own is only a milder kind of dishonesty. If reports are to be believed, he must have practised methodically what Balzac facetiously calls the English system of living on the interest of one's debts. As a result, the remark he is said to have made when asked what kind of wine he preferred, would apply equally well to his preference in money—some one's else. About his management of his political credit, too, there is much of the same light-mindedness. After sharing the ill-fortunes of the Whigs for years, he finally tricks them out of power by a turn so thoroughly comic that it looks like a caprice of the fancy, an irresistible desire to score a good point at any cost.

In a word, Sheridan combined in his own person the double rôle of Joseph and Charles Surface. He had all the former's sophistry of protestation devoid of profound sincerity of conviction, and all the latter's mischievousness of impulse devoid of intentional malice. What evil he did, he expected to excuse, like the one, by the goodness of his heart, and to dignify, like the other, by the elevation of his sentiments. As his father said with reference to "The School for Scandal," "he had but to dip the pencil in his own heart, and he'd find there the characters of both Joseph and Charles." But nature is occasionally more logical than our invention; and it is in significant contradiction with the fallacy of the dénouement that he comes to grief in both characters alike. He suffers, not only in the part of Joseph, but also in that of Charles, for his want of seriousness. And yet we must be careful. To take him too seriously is to falsify his proper impression and effect. In a certain large sense he belongs himself to comedy; and while comedy, too, may be a pretty serious business, its seriousness is not that of politics, irresistibly comic as the latter often appears. At all events, it is upon the former that Sheridan's genius has stamped itself most distinctly.

II.

The French would probably say, as indeed Taine virtually does, that Sheridan, like the rest of his countrymen, has no sense for comedy at all. But we must take our drama as we find it; and Sheridan's is the very best of anything like genuine comedy that we have. We have plenty of stage faery and romance, of tragi-comedy and melodrama; but of that sort of exhibition which arouses chiefly amusement and curiosity, which appeals above all to the intelligence, and constitutes something like a *genre tranché* comparable in any degree with the French, we have next to nothing. Congreve and the whole Restoration Comedy have failed to keep the boards for some reason or other—it can hardly be on account of their impropriety, one would infer from the present condition of the theatre. With the possible exception of Goldsmith, who is not in quite the same vein, Sheridan alone survives.

And yet how different is Sheridan himself from Molière, the representative not only of French comedy, but of the comic spirit at its fullest and best. It is not merely that he never wholly rid himself of the fatal English sentimentality, that he never completely parted company with the muse of lachrymose comedy against whom he inveighed at his first entrance upon the scene—though that has a good deal to do with it, too, and accounts for his tenderness for Charles Surface, as it does for his lack of the absolute intellectual detachment of perfect comedy, the purely disinterested pleasure in the discernment of character and motive. In this particular I

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cannot help thinking Charles Lamb's perceptions less at fault than those of his critics. But to take the comparison where it is most favorable to Sheridan—the striking passages in "The Rivals" and "The School for Scandal," the things by which we remember Sheridan (I take them as they come) are phrases like Mrs. Malaprop's "nice derangement of epitaphs" or "allegory on the banks of the Nile"; or Sir Lucius's "snug lying in the Abbey"; or Lady Teazle's "I deny the butler and the coach-horse"; or, best of all, Sir Peter's "I leave my reputation behind me."

But clever as these are, they are not in the same class with those which leap into mind at the mention of Molière: Orgon's "le pauvre homme!" or Harpagon's "sans dot!" or Argan's "C'est pour moi que je lui donne pour mari ce médicin"; or finally Madelon's "Pour moi, un de mes étonnements, c'est que vous ayez pu faire une fille si spirituelle que moi." Decidedly this is quite another thing. It is not cleverness—it is dissection; every stroke disposes of a character. It would be impossible to shift these speeches from one mouth to another, as was Sheridan's habit—a practice that gives much of his dialogue the effect of a uniform veneer. And it is not so much that Molière is greater than Sheridan—or the comparison would be an unfair one—as that he is different. Vastly entertaining as he is, Sheridan belongs with another class—with the wits and the phrase-makers. Like Oscar Wilde he is a maker of smart comedy. "Why don't all these people leave off talking and let the play begin?" asked Jekyll of "The School for Scandal"; and in a word he supplied the formula of the species.

Within these limits, however, Sheridan created the variety. In certain respects the case is much the same with him as with Beaumarchais, whose "Barbier de Seville" came out the same year as "The Rivals." Beaumarchais may have been trying, as he pretends, to naturalize and familiarize the drama; but what strikes us at first is the conventionality of his intrigue—the stock motive, the "literary" commonplace of the plot; it is only later that its perfidiousness becomes evident. And so in his own way with Sheridan; the lover courting his mistress clandestinely, the hypocrite seducing the wife of his benefactor—these are not very novel properties. It is Sheridan's waggery, like Beaumarchais's malice, which saves the situation. The very quality of his wit is implicated in the manner in which the triteness of the matter is turned against itself. To don a disguise in order to escape discovery by anxious duennas and guardians, is one thing; it is quite another to don it, as Captain Absolute does, to conceal his identity from his mistress herself. To betray a husband out of passion for some one else, and to betray a husband, as Lady Teazle contemplates doing, out of a tenderness for her own reputation, are two very different things. So, too, of Joseph and Charles Surface, it would be difficult to show in what respect the latter is more virtuous than the former, except in his contempt for the proprieties. And to much the same effect Mr. Sichel points out very properly that the dénouement of "The Rivals" and "The School for Scandal" hinges in both cases on what amounts to a practical joke, the duel in the one and the overthrow of the screen in the other. It is all very English, somehow; it is all good fun. And it is this that makes Sheridan so thoroughly enjoyable. And as a natural result in his case, the better the joke, the better the play. For this reason "The Rivals" is on the whole a more successful effort than "The School for Scandal"—just as Mrs. Malaprop is the best of his *dramatis personæ*—in spite of the more finished workmanship of the latter piece and its greater significance. The former is more in character, it suited the author better, and it is, if anything, the happier performance. In short, it is more fun, just as Sheridan himself is more fun than Congreve, more fun even than Goldsmith.

III.

It is much more difficult to form an estimate of his oratory than of his drama. Not only has the taste in eloquence changed almost unrecognizably; most of his speeches exist only in garbled and mutilated versions as they were put together from the reporter's memory. In many cases it is quite impossible to be sure just what Sheridan said. In others, curiously enough, the reporters seem to have improved upon the original.

As far as can be judged, however, from what remains, his is what may be called abstract eloquence. It consists very largely in dilating a commonplace by transmitting it through a medium of general and rhetorical terms, which destroy its definition at the same time that they enlarge it. To be sure, it is a kind of thing of which any ingenious man can produce a passable imitation nowadays, just as he can produce a passable imitation of the verse of the period. But this is not to belittle Sheridan's merit in its discovery or perfection. It is immensely clever, as he does it, and when properly delivered to suit its occasions, it must have been immensely effective, too, as it was unanimously applauded—though few of his contemporaries fail at the same time to refer to its artifice and elaboration.

But in justice to Sheridan's oratory it must also be remembered that those were the good old days of the four and five bottle men, when statesmen gambled and caroused all night, when orators made speeches five and six hours long, and fell back exhausted into the arms of their friends, when a public compliment drew forth floods of tears, and a public censure streams of vituperation and abuse—the days of sensibility and intemperance, of violence and declamation, when ginger was still hot in the mouth, and men thrived on massive sensations. Even Burke himself is by no means guiltless of extravagance. And while Sheridan's points seem labored and fetched, while he has none of his great contemporary's clearness of vision, which penetrates at times to the bottom of political institutions and discovers their foundations in the roots of the moral nature itself, yet he has occasionally, at his best, a way of striking words together which produces a very presentable imitation of revelatory lightning:

> An honorable friend of mine . . . has told you that prudence, the first of virtues, can never be used in the cause of vice. . . . But I should doubt whether we can read the history of a Philip of Macedon, a Cæsar, or a Cromwell, without confessing that there have been evil purposes, baneful to the peace and to the rights of men, conducted—if I may not say with prudence or wisdom—yet with awful craft and most successful and commanding subtlety. If, however, I might make a distinction, I should say that it is the proud attempt to mix a variety of lordly crimes, that unsettles the prudence of the mind, and breeds this distraction of the brain. One master-passion, domineering in the breast, may win the faculties of the understanding to advance its purpose, and to direct to that object everything that thought or human knowledge can effect; but to succeed it must maintain a solitary despotism in the mind—each rival profligacy must stand aloof, or wait in abject vassalage upon its throne. For the power that has not forbade the entrance of evil passions into man's mind has, at least, forbade their union; if they meet they defeat their object, and their conquest, or their attempt at it, is tumult. Turn to the virtues—how different the decree! Formed to connect, to blend, to associate, and to cooperate; bearing the same course, with kindred energies and harmonious sympathy, each perfect in its own lovely sphere, each moving in its wider or more contracted orbit, with different but concentring powers, guided by the same influence of reason, and endeavoring at the same blessed end—the happiness of the individual, the harmony of the species, and the glory of the Creator. In the Vices, on the other hand, it is the discord that insures the defeat; each clamors to be heard in its own barbarous language; each claims the exclusive cunning of the brain; each thwarts and reproaches the other; and even while their full rage assaults with common hate the peace and virtue of the world, the civil war among their own tumultuous legions defeats the purpose of the foul conspiracy. These are the Furies of the mind . . . that unsettle the understanding; these are the Furies that destroy the virtue, Prudence; while the distracted brain and shivered intellect proclaim the tumult that is within, and bear their testimonies from the mouth

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of God Himself to the foul condition of the heart.

After all, however he may look to us nowadays, Sheridan represents what is always a disturbing phenomenon—the irruption of genius into a province usually reserved for other occupants. With posterity Burke has come off lightly, thanks to his caution in editing his own memorials—and besides, Burke was much more of the expert. But outside of his comedy poor Sheridan has always lain at the mercy of the diarists and chroniclers, who have tried him by the measure of an officialism to which he did not belong, and finding him fall short, have cried out upon him for lack of a consistency which is not in his proper character at all.

PROSSER HALL FRYE.

Lincoln, Neb.

NEWS FOR BIBLIOPHILES.

A work which will take its place at the head of books in the English language on the subject is Theodore L. De Vinne's "Notable Printers of Italy during the Fifteenth Century," just issued by the Grolier Club of New York.

Almost thirty-five years ago Mr. De Vinne published his "Invention of Printing" (first edition 1876, second edition 1878), a work which still holds its position as the best comprehensive account of the beginnings of typography. In that earlier work Mr. De Vinne held closely to his subject, and, except for a chapter on the spread of printing, dealt only with the very beginnings, playing-cards, block books, etc., and the work of the first printers of Germany, Gutenberg, Fust, and Schoeffer. In this new work on Italian printing, a subject which he has studied for many years, he tells of the work of those Germans who first carried the "art preservative" into Italy, and their immediate successors.

To Italian printers we owe the use of the Roman alphabet in printed books. For more than a century after the invention of printing the Gothic, or "black-letter," was preferred in Holland, England, France, and Spain, and it is within our own day that the German printers are making a general use of the more distinct and more legible Roman characters. The letters cut by Conrad Sweinheim, Nicolas Jenson, and printers of their age, are, with modifications, the characters with which the books of the world are printed to-day. One font of Roman type was used by the unknown and so-called "R" printer of Strasburg as early as 1464, but that it did not meet with the approval of the book buyers of the day is shown by its subsequent abandonment. For the book buyers of Italy, accustomed to the lighter-faced Roman letters in their manuscripts, the Germans were ready to prepare letters of similar form for their printed books.

The first book printed in Italy was a Donatus, or Latin Grammar, printed in Roman characters, at the monastery of Subiaco, near Rome, in the year 1464, by two Germans, Conrad Sweinheim and Arnold Pennartz, who had been invited thither by its ecclesiastics. Of this first book a single copy only is known to exist. The second book, for which a Roman type of a different face was cut, was the Lactantius, printed in 1465, and of this Mr. De Vinne gives the reproduction of a page from the copy in the library of the late Robert Hoe.

After three years at Subiaco the first press was moved to Rome. In 1472, in a petition to the Pope praying for pecuniary assistance, they said that they had printed more than fifty works, amounting to 11,475 volumes. During this time also other presses had been established, mostly by Germans, in Venice and other Italian cities, and the total number of books printed in Italy during the first decade after the setting up of the first press must have run far into the thousands. Nicolas Jenson, who began printing in Venice in 1470, was the most notable of the early Italian printers, and the Roman types first cast by him are the models upon which our modern types are in large part based.

A preliminary chapter on the Roman alphabet and chapters on type-founding, printing ink, paper, composition, and the hand press will be found especially attractive to readers not interested in incunabula as such. There are forty-one full-page plates, reproductions of specimen pages of the work of various printers, besides a few illustrations printed in the text.

The work throughout shows that it was not written by a mere bibliographer describing the books, but by a master printer who, familiar with all the processes of printing, can explain them to the lay reader. And, as the most famous printer in America for nearly half a century, and as a man who did not follow William Morris with his Kelmscott "revival" of twenty years ago, and its many imitators, Mr. De Vinne may well stand up for modern printing as most suited for modern readers. Upon this head we quote the following:

> Praise fairly due to some early books has been conceded unwisely to too many. Eulogies of the general superiority of fifteenth century typography, written by critics a long time afterward, when the printing of the seventeenth century was in its lowest estate, were justifiable then, but are not warrantable now. An old book may be highly esteemed for its age and rarity, for its quaint mannerisms or its association with a famous editor, printer, binder, or owner; but these peculiarities may not invest it with a sacredness that puts it beyond examination and comparison. The reading world of this century has its own standard of fair workmanship in printing, by which it judges the old as well as the new. The new too often suffers by comparison, but the old is not always faultless.

And again:

> Few of the written and printed books of small size, cheaply made for the needs of young scholars and poor buyers, are in existence now, for they were generally thumbed to rags by persistent handling, and for that shabbiness have been kept out of neat collections, but enough have survived to indicate the existence of the larger number destroyed. The old books that are now made to serve for comparison with new books are of the better class.

On June 1 and 2, C. F. Libbie & Co. will sell in Boston the library of the late Charles Edwin Hurd, literary editor of the Boston *Transcript* for nearly thirty years. Mr. Hurd was vice-president and one of the founders of the Bibliophile Society, and a complete set of that society's publications are included in the sale.

On May 31 and June 1, the Anderson Auction Co. will sell the books and autographs of the late Joseph M. Hart of Troy, N. Y. First editions of Shelley's "Adonais" (1821) and "Queen Mab" (1813); early New England and New York imprints; books with colored plates, etc., are included.

On June 2 and 3 the Merwin-Clayton Sales Co. offers a miscellaneous collection of books, including nearly fifty pamphlets on early American railways and a quantity of portraits for extra-illustrating.

Correspondence.

BORDEN PARKER BOWNE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The deep, quiet devotion of the "great teacher" to one of the less prominent institutions, which younger men are so often pitiably but honestly unable to comprehend, was strikingly characteristic of the group of men who served Boston University almost from its inception. Their academic creed was the transcendent belief that "it is beautiful simply to know things."

And it is no vain and gratuitous lauding *temporis acti* that insists on remembering the splendid enthusiasms, the unfailing stimulus to the eternal questioning, the almost apostolic fervor for teaching as an art which they incited.

Of the three who have but recently ceased to teach, Prof. Augustus Buck, now in voluntary retirement in the Germany of his youthful university days, was for more than half a century, most of that time at Boston University, a teacher of truly inspiring type. So careful for the nice balances of the letter that he never let the smallest "particle" of his loved Greek go untranslated, he could, too, by his own impassioned interpretation, rouse the most stolid freshman to grasp something of the spirit of Socrates's sublime Apology; and even with hurdy-gurdies and florists' windows to create the illusion, he made Theocritus and the lyric fragments the joy of a senior springtime and a memory forever to be loved and forever fair.

The late Prof. Thomas Bond Lindsay was a master of the art of coördination, and whatever the Latin text studied under him, all literature was its commentary. So Lucretius brought to many the first real grappling with Whence? and Whither? Such a teacher could show the agonized vision of doubt behind the insidious melody of the "Rubáiyát" and in the laborious embroidering, in sombre richness of color, of the theme of "In Memoriam." William Watson, in that first outpouring of real achievement and ringing verse, served to give present significance to Juvenal's scorn and Persius's ire by means of "The Things that are More Excellent."

The recent death of Prof. Borden Parker Bowne, whom the academic world knows best by his philosophical writings and public addresses, brings to his pupils an intensified realization of the compelling personality of the teacher. They recall gratefully his encouragement to those who would enter the vastnesses of Thought and who learned from him that happiness is surely in travelling hopefully.

Compelled for many years to furnish lectures on the Philosophy of Theism as a prescribed course for students of varying training and receptivity, he inevitably re-

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mained unknown to many younger, awe-inspired students; but he was greatly loved and sought as adviser by others. He could not, however, without sacrilege, be called popular with the ordinary connotations of that word. That he could so persistently take his philosophic view from the angle of theism was cause for wonder to some who follow the changing fashions in philosophical nomenclature and find an apologetic appearance in a previous decade's styles. His was a mind to prove all things, but his very conservatism helped his gift for emphasizing the few things that are really good and to be held fast.

On the margins of class-books, especially the "Ethics," I find pencilled epigrammatic sayings of the author-lecturer, elaborating and illustrating his text. They bring back the invariably gentle voice and the inscrutable smile that could rebuke the hollow sophistries of the unthinking and clamorously insistent youth with Xavier de Maistre's "On voit bien, excellent jeune homme, que vous avez dix-huit ans; à quarante je vous attendrai." There was infinite patience with ignorance, but a certain bitterness in the protests against the limitations of rigid, unreasoning theological bias, against the foolishness and mental vanity of halfway knowledge, and the inanity of the "well-intentioned." He could condemn without vehement denunciation. "It's the easiest thing in the world to denounce somebody," he said long before muck-raking became pleasant and profitable. In the marginal notes are found the following:

The ease with which persons are injured varies inversely as their intellectual development.

Pretty much everything in this world is an edge-tool, and fools among others exist at their own peril.

It is becoming less and less a world in which fools can live in safety.

The chief mark of the fool is that he is clamorously delighted over nothings.

Referring to a certain kind of self-imposed mental misery over remote ills, he said, "We could not distress ourselves if we would over some indignity in South Africa." Much of our seeming hypocrisy, however, he deemed merely "handy remarks to make under the circumstances"; and the note adds, "'I'm glad to see you,' as glad as the occasion demands." Many of the apparently hard sayings of Professor Bowne were directed against the elusive disguises of a perennially recurring Phariseeism, and the subtle settling with conscience that leads to various schemes of so-called altruism (really a "wise selfishness at best," as he called it). Thus:

It is selfishness that most makes for righteousness, and justice is the second choice of the many.

We have no revelation as to the bearing of to-day's activity upon the twentieth generation to come.

Many of the workers in the slums and settlements, where he occasionally lectured, he declared to be self-deceived as to motive and results; and time has shown that the self-development of the worker is the most tangible result in many cases, although the neighborhood settlement remains the best of a poor array of social palliatives. Much of our current generosity he termed "pathologic," and with the much-organized report-writing charities in the early days, at least, he lost patience. "I abominate," he said, "all general philanthropies. The natural selfishness of the race is safer on the whole than our philanthropy." Again, "the great bulk of humanitarian effort is lost objectively." A very "successful" East Side minister recently made the same admission, despairing of the great waste of individual endeavor. From certain kinds of inflammatory preaching which advocated useless sacrifice of the individual, Professor Bowne found safety in the apathy of congregations. "Much of the preaching would be calamitous if it were not for the dulness of those who listen." No one was more of a temper to quote, as he used to do:

Tho' love repine and reason chafe,
There comes this voice without reply,
'Tis man's perdition to be safe
When for the truth he ought to die.

But against offering this gospel as "an equation of happiness" no one could protest more vigorously.

In answer to the objection that woman suffrage, "like popular suffrage has fearsome possibilities," there is found the note: "Logic leads to the abysses." No saner, more temperate consideration of that burning issue could be found, by the way, than the brief page or more in his "Principles of Ethics."

He was fond of emphasizing the "Function of Illusion in Life," and his little allegory, noted merely as pleasing, takes on rich meaning after years: "If it were not for the rainbow, we should not get on. We follow the gleam; at first we misinterpret it; we live by it, eventually." His life and temperament ever exemplified belief in his own words, "This world is full of possible beauty," and "the joy of living cannot be separated from the joy of knowing." Those who knew him will recall how often those words, "the joy of knowing," were on his lips, and that other phrase, "a common faithfulness," for which he pleaded with the intense conviction that it was the sum of life, learning, and all endeavor.

In the undergraduate days, when life needed not philosophy to make it tolerable, his hearers admired his brilliancy, serenity, and conviction; when the problem became real for them, inextricably bound up with the value of life, they remembered his teachings. Greater monument could no teacher have.

MARY COWELL HAM.

Brunswick, Me., May 16.

CURIOSITY AND THE COMET.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Nothing pleases some people so much as facts. They will spend whole hours in persistent yet apparently aimless questioning of their acquaintances, or in concentrated application to newspaper articles and technical reviews. Details of mechanical processes, circumstantial accounts of the most unimportant happenings, are all enchantingly attractive to them, because, and only because, they are series of facts. Obviously the motive for such truth-seeking is intellectual curiosity, pure and simple, with no basis of a desire to use the knowledge gained, or of pleasure in the gaining.

Just at present, the existence of the fact-hunting point of view is even more easily discerned than usual among people in general. All you have to do is to mention the comet, and your friend's mind classifies itself immediately. He may begin to talk in a mildly historical vein of the curious superstitions it has inspired in the past; he may discourse of its wonder and natural beauty; he may take a soberly philosophic view of the littleness of man and his world. But if he begins to tell at once how many times he has seen the comet already, at what hour it will appear to-morrow morning, and how much good his little pocket telescope really does him, he is a fact-hunter, and you may know exactly where to put him.

A hundred and fifty years ago, however, nearly everybody was a fact-hunter. That remark is not a wild generalization from histories of eighteenth century literature, but a deduction from a relic of the "age of prose and reason" itself. Nothing but the general acceptance of that point of view as natural and right would ever have led to the publication of a poem that was found not long ago in a pile of old letters, dated all of them about the time of the appearance of the comet in 1759. The name of the paper in which it appeared is not given on the clipping, but it was doubtless a New York weekly of that time. One only wishes that the modern prosaically-minded fact-hunter were unsophisticated enough to unbosom himself as frankly as did the provincial bard. A lament in a current metre, one patterned after Alfred Austin, for instance, and inspired by the poet's lack of sufficiently accurate astronomical instruments, would be a relief from the flood of verse, which, I quite clearly perceive, will richly supply the magazines for the next few months. The eighteenth century model has, at any rate, "one native charm":

Hah! There it flames, the long expected star,
And darts it's awful glories from afar!
Punctual at length the traveller appears
From it's long journey of nigh four-score years.
Lo! the reputed messenger of fate,
Array'd in glorious, but tremendous state,
Moves on majestick o'er the heav'nly plain
And shakes dire sparkles in it's fiery train.
Ah! my misfortune that I live retir'd,
And nought avail me arts I once acquir'd!
Here, like an hermit, in my lonely cell,
Far from the mansions where the Muses dwell,
I'm forc'd to act the common gazer's part,
Alas! unfurnish'd with the aids of art!
O for the tube, with philosophic eye
To trace the shining wand'rer thro' the sky!
O for the ampler arch, in nicer mode,
To mark it's stages in its azure road!
But vain the wish, oh! ye that can survey
The glorious orb, and track its wondrous way,
And find it's shortest distance from the source of day,
While vulgar crowds with dull attention gaze,
And gaping, wonder at the silver blaze;
Ye sons of science, from your high abodes,
Discry it's oblique path, and mark it's nodes,
Explore with what velocity it's hurled,
And what exact its period round the world.
Now, now in this delightful work engage,
Pursue the steps of the sagacious sage,
And be this wiser than the former age.

ELIZABETH CRANE PORTER.

Andover, Mass., May 18.

LIBERIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Any one appreciating the importance of the audience addressed by the *Nation* and at all well informed as to Liberian affairs, internal or international, must regret the endorsement given in your is-

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sue of April 21 to the report of the Liberian Commission.

Readers of this report or of your review of it will receive an impression of Liberia as a native republic whose difficulties are due solely to foreign interference with its independence; of Great Britain as the *instans tyrannus*, who, for a century, has been fomenting these difficulties in order to encroach on or intrigue against that independence; of the United States as an earthly providence which at the right moment will send, as a *deus ex machina*, a cruiser or a minister with a treaty in his pocket. Such an impression is as false as the information on which it is based is fallacious. The difficulties in Liberia are due solely to the incompetence and corruption of the small governing class. The country is bankrupt, and has no credit and nothing in its treasury; but the total debt charge is only 15 per cent. of the revenue, and were the collected revenue paid into the treasury, it would be amply sufficient for all requirements. Again, the disorders in the interior are caused neither by the intrigues of Great Britain nor by the turbulence of savage races raiding or revolting against civilized rule; but by the extortions and outrages of the armed expeditions sent out by the Liberian government against peaceable villages. That is the origin of the present trouble with the Grebas and the reason why the Kroo coast refuses to acknowledge Liberian rule. Indeed, not long ago a raiding force of Liberians, after ravaging several villages was disarmed by the natives and sent back to Monrovia unharmed.

Liberian rule is corrupt, cruel, and, fortunately, confined to a small coast strip; which facts should be as well known in the United States as are the same disappointing developments in colored communities of the Western Hemisphere. Until they are well known Liberia will remain exposed to the cruel kindness of good people who—

> have just got a notion
> for making a motion
> that black shall in future be white.

Now, sir, to turn to the international aspects of the report. The whole course of Liberian history goes to show that the dramatic tableau staged in the report as an American Perseus rescuing a Liberian Andromeda from the British sea monster is, to say the least, fanciful. If American philanthropists made Liberia, British cruisers made the Liberians. It was Great Britain that first recognized Liberian independence, fifteen years before the United States did so; and for the last twenty years the maintenance of that independence has been due to British support. But it is unnecessary to go further for a recognition of the true relations between Great Britain and Liberia than the recent correspondence published last year when Mr. Roosevelt recommended to Congress the appropriations for this commission. This correspondence shows that in 1897 Great Britain made the following proposal to the United States:

> It might prove of service to the Liberian Republic and encourage it to resist absorption by a foreign Power were the governments of Great Britain and the United States to make a joint declaration of the special interest taken by them in the independence of the republic.

A suitable reply was made by the State Department, and the understanding was notified to the Liberian government by the American minister in the following terms:

> It is my privilege to present these *promemoria*. . . . The one from the United States which I have the honor to represent at this court, gives me profound pleasure to present to the home of my ancestors—the one from Great Britain increases my admiration for his Majesty's government as a power of justice and equity.

Ten years later, in 1908, Sir E. Grey, foreign secretary, made another proposal that the United States government should take over judicial reform in Liberia, and added:

> While calling attention to this branch of administration which has been a frequent scène of trouble, I need hardly add that his Majesty's government would welcome the coöperation of the government of the United States with them in Liberia in any other manner which may appear most suitable or more observable on a consideration of all the circumstances.
>
> It appears to his Majesty's government that the main risk to the future of Liberia arises from the inefficiency of Liberia's administration of their own affairs, especially in matters of finance, and any suggestions which the United States might see fit to give them to follow the advice of such foreigners as they have themselves engaged to help in their administration would have a beneficial effect.

VERITAS.

Washington, D. C., May 15.

LORD CROMER AND THE EGYPTIAN PEASANTRY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Before the echoes of Mr. Roosevelt's Cairo address have quite blown away, the following unconscious tribute to Lord Cromer's exertions on behalf of the Egyptian peasantry may prove of interest.

One of the most voluminous, varied, and picturesque of the mediæval Arabic romances of chivalry has recently (1908-1909) been printed at Cairo for the first time. It is the story of the Sultan az-Zahir Baybars, and the publisher, who was, apparently, as frequently in such cases occurs, also a redactor, announced at the beginning that it would consist of fifty parts. But for this number he was unable to find material, and was therefore obliged to fill in, from page 20 of Part 48, with a strongly nationalist outline history of Egypt, Syria, and Turkey, down to the present time. The latest date I can find is April 9, 1909; but there is no hint of a Turkish revolution, and his Majesty Abdul Hamid is still reigning gloriously.

This whole appendix is of the highest interest as an example of how popular history can be written. But the point to which I now write to draw attention is in the section on Lord Cromer (Part 49, p. 47). There the writer, evidently a townsman and of the "learned" class, complains that Lord Cromer brought young men from his own country, and put them into government posts which should have been held by natives, and that he "succeeded, by his guile and astuteness, in drawing to his side the hearts of the peasantry, and of the simple-minded among the country governors and shaikhs, who used to write to him reports and complaints and lying desires."

Of course, until the time of the English control, no Egyptian ruler or ruling class ever thought of the peasantry, except as a source of labor and revenue. That the Egyptian upper and middle classes still view it in the same way is, unfortunately, too certain. Lord Cromer's consideration of them could, therefore, be only the guile of the politician. Yet one hardly expected to find so complete and naïve an admission of the success of his policy. Perhaps, with time and patience the peasantry may at last be persuaded to exercise the voting power which it already possesses. When it does so, by far the most important step will have been taken towards full parliamentary government. For before that comes, the peasantry, the most weighty if the most silent element in the Egyptian population, must be equipped and ready to protect itself against the exactions and the contempt of the other classes.

DUNCAN B. MACDONALD.

Hartford, Conn., May 17.

THE PHILIPPINE LANDS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In reply to Mr. Bingham's letter in the *Nation* of the 12th, may I suggest some considerations in regard to the sale of Philippine lands in large quantities?

In the first place it is a matter of common knowledge that Mr. Taft has expressed repeatedly his hope that the Philippine Islands, at a time when their independence may be properly considered, will not aspire to it, but will be satisfied with a colonial attachment to the United States, which he believes to be a desirable permanent condition. The Filipinos, whenever and wherever their voice has been able to make itself heard, protest against the colonial position and demand independence at the earliest possible date, secured through neutralization by the great Powers. This voice has spoken loudly and clearly to deplore these large sales, because it is apprehended that the establishment of interests such as those of great sugar or tobacco cultivators will create powerful influences against the independence of the islands. The true welfare of the people of the islands was sought in the establishment, under the authority of Congress, of an agricultural bank which has not been successfully developed. The admirable "Raiffeisen" system of agricultural credit was adopted by the Philippine Assembly in a bill which was done to death in the upper House (the Philippine Commission, composed of Mr. Taft's appointees). It is quite obvious why the attitude taken towards exploitation by Senator Hoar, who earnestly hoped for the early independence of the Philippine Islands, was antagonized by Mr. Taft, who has never even reckoned with it.

Mr. Taft may be a friend of the *land* of the Philippine Islands, but he cannot in any proper sense be said to be a friend of the Philippine *people*.

Ireland and even Scotland to a large extent have been depopulated by those who love the land and not the people.

ERVING WINSLOW.

Boston, May 16.

A CORRECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As a reader of the *Nation* and an English Liberal, permit me to say that you are mistaken in believing that the budget

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has passed as the result of "one of its most contentious provisions being struck out" (the *Nation*, May 5, p. 449). No concession at all was made. Agricultural land was from the first exempt from the increment tax. RICHARD CAPELL.

London, May 5.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Allow me to call your attention to an error in your article on page 449 of the last issue of the *Nation*. No actual change was made in the British budget upon its final passage except in the matter of dates to fit the new conditions.

The original budget did not assess the new 20 per cent. increment duty on land used for agricultural purposes, and the declaration on that subject in the bill as finally passed was inserted merely for the purpose of clearing up a possible ambiguity in the original wording.

One would infer from the remainder of your article that as a fiscal scheme the historic budget had been something of a failure; an idea which is hardly borne out by a careful reading of the debates in the House of Commons, as reported in the most recent London newspapers. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, at any rate, seemed disposed to congratulate the chancellor of the exchequer upon his favorable statement. Of course, a surplus of "only $14,500,000" is nothing to boast of, but it is better than a deficit. GEO. Q. THORNTON.

St. Louis, Mo., May 6.

THE THESIS OF A PLAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your issue for April 7 there appeared an interesting notice of the revised edition of William Vaughn Moody's "The Faith Healer." I should like to raise a question about one remark in this notice:

> The great weakness of the play in its first estate, as has been pointed out in this journal more than once, was the vagueness of its intent and meaning, as if the author were himself in doubt as to the true nature of the phenomena with which he had undertaken to deal. . . . This defect is as conspicuous in the revised version as in the end.

This struck me as a very unjust bit of criticism. What attitude other than doubt as to the nature of such phenomena is possible at present to an intelligent man? And are we to exclude from the legitimate field of drama every phenomenon which we do not fully understand? If we do, how much will be left?

To make sure that I did not misunderstand your critic, I referred to his review of the earlier version of the play (*Nation*, February 18, 1909). He there remarks:

> The play would be stronger if it were clearer in meaning and purpose, more definite in argument and declaration. It is difficult in reading it to determine whether it is a profession of faith, a spiritual romance, or a *mere* dramatic study of existing conditions. (The italics are mine.)

I am reminded of a remark made by a student in our engineering department, apropos of a presentation of Ben Jonson's "Silent Woman": "I don't think it's really a good play; there isn't any moral which you can take away with you and think about."

Against the assumption which underlies the sentences quoted from the *Nation*, I wish to enter a vigorous protest. The doctrine of your critic seems to be that a play cannot deserve the highest praise unless it presents some definite thesis, some clear-cut solution of a problem. This critical attitude, I suppose, is due chiefly to the influence of Ibsen. A great master of dramatic technique has seen fit to confuse the functions of the stage with those of the pulpit or the platform; many lesser men have followed him, and, as usually happens, a criticism has arisen which sees in their practice a fundamental principle of drama.

Of course, this principle is beautifully exemplified in the plays of such men as Ibsen and Shaw, from which it is derived. Almost all their plays are what Mr. Chesterton calls "propaganda" plays. But how will the principle apply to the great dramas of the past? Can we be quite sure that Sophocles, in describing the death of Œdipus and the voice which called him "many times and in many quarters," was not "in doubt concerning the true nature of the phenomena with which he had undertaken to deal?" Is "Œdipus" or "Hamlet" "clear in meaning and purpose, definite in argument and declaration?" If they were, should we be fascinated by them still?

I am not yet ready to believe that a play is a better play because it is also a sermon or an essay. I cannot escape from the conviction that what your critic regards as the chief fault of "The Faith Healer" is really one of its greatest merits. Mr. Moody has set forth in splendid dramatic form a situation which would have tempted a lesser man to promulgate a psychological theory, thinly disguised as a play.

HOMER E. WOODBRIDGE.

Colorado Springs, April 23.

[We print this letter because it raises an interesting question of art. Our reviewer did not mean, and did not imply, that a play is better for being a sermon or an essay; he did mean that a play, or any other work of literature, is better if the writer has a clear perception of the theme he has in hand, and a clear notion of his own mental and emotional attitude toward that theme. Crude didacticism may injure a work of art, "vagueness of intent and meaning" may also be injurious," the greatest work of art will always convey a definite moral impression.—ED. NATION.]

Literature.

THE ARTHURIAN ROMANCES.

The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances. Edited from manuscripts in the British Museum, by H. Oskar Sommer. Vol. I: L'Estoire del Saint Graal; Vol II: L'Estoire de Merlin. Washington: The Carnegie Institution.

The publication of a work of such magnitude as the present would in Europe be the function of some academy of sciences; it is fortunate that we have at last on this side of the ocean in the Carnegie Institution a foundation which possesses the material resources to carry through an enterprise of this nature. To be sure, the aid of the Institution has been hitherto mainly extended to investigators in the physical sciences, but we hope that with so liberal a recognition of the claims of literary research as is implied in the present publication we may look forward in future to a more abundant flow of favors in this direction. In any event, the Institution is earning the gratitude of all serious students of literature by the issue of these splendid volumes—the product of the Riverside Press—which in beauty of typography are not inferior to the publications of any learned body in the world. We only regret that it should have chosen to date them respectively 1909 (Vol. I) and 1908 (Vol. II), although they were really published in 1910. This is sure to lead to confusion in future researches in this field.

The first two volumes which lie before us comprise the branches of the Vulgate cycle generally known, respectively, as the "Grand Saint Graal" and the "Merlin." The whole work, as Dr. Sommer announces, is to consist of six volumes, of which the third, fourth, and fifth are to contain the "Lancelot," and the last the "Queste del Saint Graal" and "Mort Artus." With the very important exception of the "Lancelot," all the branches of the cycle have already appeared in print. For instance, the "Grand Saint Graal" has been edited by both Furnivall and Hucher; and the "Merlin" by Dr. Sommer himself. Nevertheless, the present publication has its value even for these works, since it rests on a much more extensive examination of the manuscript material, and in the case of the former offers the text (a somewhat abbreviated one, to be sure) of a manuscript which has not been printed before in its entirety. As in his previous publications, Dr. Sommer merely prints exact transcripts of the manuscripts, without editing them. Headlines and ample side-notes, however, make it easy to glance rapidly over the narrative, and he has also adopted a system of cross-references to previous editions of these romances, which renders it easy to compare any passage. Furthermore, collations are given at the bottom of the page from some other manuscripts, although it is to be regretted that no statement is made as to how systematic these collations are.

The manuscript which Dr. Sommer has chosen as the basis of his edition of the whole cycle is Additional 10292-4 of the British Museum. One may well question whether it is advisable to print all the branches of the cycle from this one manuscript, simply because it happens to contain them all, regardless of the fact that a less abbreviated text of each branch of the cycle—that is, accordingly, a text which represents more nearly the original form of each of these branches—may be obtained from separate manuscripts. For, although Dr. Sommer does not state it, Additional

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10292-4 is really a somewhat shortened text of the Vulgate Version. This is indisputably true of the first and last branches, and it is presumably true of the intervening branches. The collations at the bottom of the page from other manuscripts will make up in part for the deficiencies of the main manuscript, but not altogether. Taken as a whole, the abbreviations, no doubt, only rarely involve the omission of incidents, but in the last branch, at least, they are in one or two places of such a character as seriously to impair the value of the manuscript. Still further, the disadvantages of a shortened text will certainly be felt, when it is used (as Dr. Sommer expects it will be) for purposes of collation in the preparation of a critical edition. On the other hand, there are certain advantages in having in print the whole of one of the only six manuscripts extant that embrace the whole cycle (each of which, however, has its imperfections), even though it is, to a certain degree, shortened, and students of the Arthurian romances will be too grateful to Dr. Sommer for undertaking the task at all to quarrel with him over this matter. To give three years and seven months to the mere transcription of the text (as he tells us he did) is devotion enough for any cause.

Notes do not enter into the plan of the present edition, but Dr. Sommer has prefixed to his first volume an Introduction of twenty-six pages which contains a description of MS. Additional 10292-4, a list of the manuscripts and early prints which he has used in the preparation of his work, and a critical discussion of the development of the Vulgate cycle, consisting in large measure of a summary of the editor's views on this subject as already expounded in various philological journals. With regard to the description of the MS. Additional 10292-4, we have commented above on Dr. Sommer's neglect to state that it offers a shortened text. But, still further, how can he speak in this place (as he has done once before) as if he were the first person to notice that the date of this manuscript (1316) was fixed by a certain miniature in the first volume, when the description of the manuscript in Ward's "Catalogue of Romances" has made this a matter of common knowledge for upwards of twenty-five years? He should also have warned the reader that his tables of manuscripts do not embrace all the manuscripts of the various branches of this cycle which are accessible in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The same is true of the list of early prints. Dr. Sommer adopts the division (already frequently in use) of the "Lancelot" into three parts, and there is no objection to this (only the older division into two has the justification of following a common arrangement of the manuscripts), but the exclusion of Part iii (known as the "Agravain") from the term "Lancelot proper" does not accord with general usage. Indeed, Dr. Sommer himself did not so use it, when he published his "Studies on the Sources of Malory's 'Morte Darthur,'" though, to be sure, in that work he made the mistake of calling the whole "Lancelot" the "Livre d'Artus," which is the term he now rightly applies to the second part of the "Merlin."

We have not the space here to enter fully into the discussion of Dr. Sommer's theories concerning the development of the cycle. In some respects, they manifestly require correction, as when he makes the "Galahad-Queste" later than the "Mort Artus," for the "Galahad-Queste" is, beyond dispute, an important source of the "Mort Artus," as the recent edition of the latter work shows. Dr. Sommer, moreover, exaggerates his originality in regard to most of what is sound in his theories here, and still more in the various articles which he has in recent years devoted to these questions. For instance, Gaston Paris recognized fully, in his review (*Romania*, 1887) of Von Reinhartstoettner's (uncompleted) edition of the Portuguese "Demanda," that this was the third part of the so-called Robert de Borron trilogy of the Arthurian romances; and Wechssler showed satisfactorily that an "Estoire del Saint Graal" (and not a "Joseph," as in the Huth manuscript) constituted originally the first part of this trilogy, even conjecturing that the Torre do Tombo manuscript contained this "Estoire" in Portuguese form. The results here indicated anticipate the essentials of Dr. Sommer's conclusions on the same subjects. Again, as regards Dr. Sommer's remarks on the place of the "Livre d'Artus" in the Vulgate cycle, they simply prove that Gaston Paris did not sufficiently note all the incongruities between this branch and the "Lancelot" (and perhaps their use of common sources, which is interesting, if confirmed), but they do not touch the main matter, in which he was undoubtedly right, viz., that this same "Livre d'Artus," no doubt the last to be composed of all the branches, was written to connect the "Merlin" and the "Lancelot." We do not believe that that eminent scholar would have been greatly disturbed by this list of incongruities —though interesting in itself—for he must have recognized that after all the different romances that make up the cycle were originally written as separate works solely for the purpose of entertainment without any thought that some day the *assembleurs* would unite them in huge manuscripts, so that their occasional want of harmony, and even bare-faced plagiarisms from one another, would stand out in the clear light of day.

We might mention still other points in which we differ from Dr. Sommer—for instance, in his inference that a "Perceval Quest," now lost, must have once formed an integral part of the Vulgate cycle—but we prefer, in conclusion, to speak of matters in which there is no disagreement between us, as in regard to the late origin of the "Didot-Perceval," and especially in regard to the "infinitesimal" influence of Celtic tradition on the romances of this cycle. After all, however, it is the texts that are the main thing, and whatever one's views may be concerning the critical questions which swarm about these romances, no student of mediæval literature will lay aside the present volumes without a feeling of gratitude to the editor and an earnest wish that he may bring his immense task to a successful conclusion.

CURRENT FICTION.

Murder Point: A Tale of Keewatin. By Coningsby William Dawson. New York: George H. Doran Co.

This book starts as if it were going to do justice to its lurid title, but the author loses his grip after a few chapters and the story becomes a bit vague. It seems to be chiefly concerned with this question: When Spurling killed Mordaunt, did he know she was a woman? As she passed for a man in Alaskan mining camps, one can understand that Spurling might have shot her under a misapprehension as to her sex. Doubt and perplexity over this matter cause much trouble in the mind of Granger, who left Spurling and Mordaunt hunting gold in Alaska, and came to Keewatin. If Spurling knowingly shot a woman, then vengeance must be had, particularly since Granger knew Mordaunt was a woman, and had fallen in love with her. On the other hand, if Spurling thought she was a man, it did not matter so much. Granger is further puzzled as to whether or not he should marry a certain half-breed girl, named Peggy. He owes it to her, but he remembers that with a squaw wife he can never return to England and civilization. This bothers him a good deal, being an Oxford man and a competent oar. These two problems keep him busy for three or four hundred pages; till one marvels at his consummate inability to solve them. A priest finally persuades him to marry Peggy, by way of fulfilling his obvious duty, but the other question is settled in a manner devious and unconvincing. Peggy murders Spurling in order to get the matter off her husband's mind, and then when the sergeant of the Mounted Police arrives, suspecting Granger, the latter gives himself up to save his wife, and departs with the sergeant in order, as the book succinctly remarks, to be hanged.

The story is evidently an attempt at realistic portrayal of life in the North-

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west, somewhat after the fashion of Jack London. We can believe Mr. Dawson when he tells us of the loneliness and isolation of the life which Granger leads as a post trader. Also the effects which the country has on the man and his mind are well set forth. But when it comes to Granger's dealings with his fellow men, the touch is not so sure. A great deal of it that is meant to be powerful reaches only the level of the melodramatic. The impression left by the story as a whole is one of confusion and lack of direction. The situations often give the reader a feeling which in one place is ascribed to Granger (the italics are the author's): "Gradually the most fatal feeling that any man can experience in northland travel stole over him—*he felt that he did not care.*"

Legends of the City of Mexico. By Thomas A. Janvier. Harper & Bros.

These nineteen legends which Mr. Janvier and his wife have collected in the City of Mexico will be equally attractive to the folklorist and the disinterested reader. The stories are a genuine product of the people. A laundress and a waiter furnished the greater number of them, and several, as Mr. Janvier points out in notes, have Spanish or other European parallels. We may remark that the feat of the Mulata de Cordoba, who sailed away from her captors in a ship she had drawn on the wall, finds an interesting pendant in the tale of the Chinese artist who walked into his painted screen and disappeared forever.

Mr. Janvier has been successful in reproducing the simple manner of the story-tellers and in conveying the shudder that befits these ghostly topics. Told beside a flickering fire, these legends would infallibly produce that pleasing "cold qualm in the stomach" which the narrators so often mention as the sure sign that spirits are by. Walter Appleton Clark has contributed half a dozen effective illustrations, and there are as many photographic cuts depicting the places where these legends are localized.

The Royal Americans. By Mary Hallock Foote. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Many a reader will take up this book with genuine pleasure at the sight of Mrs. Foote's name once more upon a title-page, and only those unreasonably expectant of a renewal of her very best work need lay it down in disappointment. Pleasant, indeed, is the easy, clean-cut style, and pleasant the fresh, sweet atmosphere, moral and physical, the vein of pure romance. Though the author's pen has been trained to depict the mountains and deserts of the Far West, it has no less cunning to sketch a more homely scene. Description is, on the whole, Mrs. Foote's forte. In straight-away narrative, too, like that of Catherine's drive across the field of death at Saratoga, she is very good. But, in exposition—to keep to the academic divisions—she is decidedly at fault. When she has any complicated matter to explain, she seems to get a little flustered, like inexpert talkers who, having neither the gift of flashing quick illumination upon their subject nor the self-assertiveness to insist on their hearers' attention to a merciless succession of details, become embarrassed at the first signs of inattention, and hurry confusedly over the ends of their stories, leaving the main point as dark as ever.

Mrs. Foote's *mise en scène*—the heroine is born at Fort Ontario in 1756, and finds her happiness on the morrow of Burgoyne's surrender—can hardly fail to suggest that much faultier and incalculably greater romance, Cooper's "Spy," and to awake again the endless question, what is genius? Why will that book, with its turgid English, its insufferable *longueurs*, its detestably feminine "females," live on in literature, while hundreds of pleasant stories like "The Royal Americans" are read, enjoyed, and forgotten?

The Awakening of Zojas. By Miriam Michelson. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

Miss Michelson is an adroit teller of tales. The four stories which make up the present book show a good deal of versatility. The first and longest of them, "The Awakening of Zojas," is also the most striking—a fresh treatment of the old idea of a life suspended and awaking to a new world after many years. Zojas is an Italian brigand, condemned to death for a brutal murder and rescued for scientific purposes by a learned man who has discovered a way of suspending animation for a century. He comes to life to make himself leader of the popular party, and finally dictator. "The Cradle," by way of contrast, is the story of a viking's daughter, phrased in the lingo of the historical romancer. The two remaining stories, "Peach Blossoms" and "Tares," with their mingling of realism in detail and romanticism in substance, are, we take it, really characteristic of the writer, and of the order of magazine fiction with which she has identified herself. They are cleverly conceived and executed; they have a good deal of intensity and not a little humor. But they have the defect of their kind. Seeming to deal with the materials of tragedy, they really lack the scope and dignity demanded by that great word. The human figures involved are not of sufficient stature: the end of them and of their intense experiences is at most pathos. The real achievement of tragedy is, of course, beyond the reach of the short-story writer. But the tragic note may be struck, may at least be dimly heard as a sympathetic vibration. Our magazines just now are clearly under the domination of the humorous-pathetic pseudo-realism which tends to corrupt the public taste for true comedy and true tragedy.

A GREAT PUBLISHER.

Robert Dodsley, Poet, Publisher, and Playwright. By Ralph Straus. With a photogravure portrait and twelve other illustrations. New York: John Lane Co. $6.50 net.

After the few really great names, that of Robert Dodsley is one of the most frequently heard of the eighteenth century, yet of the events of his life—beyond the fact that he was the publisher and friend of Johnson—you would probably find even well-informed readers surprisingly ignorant, and of his literary work, apart from his successful editing of the "Collection of Poems" and "Old Plays," you would find still grosser ignorance. Yet Dodsley's bookshop, at Tully's Head in Pall Mall, was one of the centres of literary society from its opening in 1735 until the retirement of its founder in 1759, and indeed in a lesser degree until the death of Robert's brother and successor, James, in 1797. He was himself a poet of some distinction, and a popular playwright. Mr. Straus's biography, therefore, is not, like most of the eighteenth-century memoirs now appearing, a superfluity, but fills a real want. The work, we may add, is solidly, if not brilliantly, written. Some new material has come to light, and in all nearly two hundred letters to or from Dodsley have passed through the author's hands.

Possibly the book might have been made more lifelike if a few more of Dodsley's own letters had been printed, although it cannot be said that the master of Tully's Head possessed much of Tully's epistolary art. Only once, so far as Mr. Straus permits us to judge, does he show the poet in his correspondence, and that is when, writing to Spence (author of the "Anecdotes" and owner of Byfleet, a rival to Shenstone's Leasowes), he expresses his desire for leisure:

> But here am I, ty'd down to the World, immerst in Business with very little Prospect of ever being able to disengage myself. 'Tis true, my Business is of such a nature, and so agreeable to the Turn of my Mind, that I have often very great Pleasure in the Pursuit of it. I don't know but I may sometimes be as entertain'd in planning a book as you are in laying out the plan of a Garden. Yet I don't know how it is, I cannot help languishing after that Leisure which perhaps if it was in my possession I should not be able to enjoy. I am afraid the man who would truly relish and enjoy Retirement must be previously furnished with a large and various stock of Ideas, which he must be capable

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of turning over in his own mind, of comparing, varying, and contemplating upon with pleasure; he must so thoroughly have seen the World as to cure him of being over fond of it; and he must have so much good sense and Virtue in his own Breast as to prevent him from being disgusted with his own Reflections or uneasy in his own Company. I am sorry to feel myself not so well qualify'd for this sacred Leisure as I could wish, in any one respect; but glad I have a Friend from whose example I cannot but hope I shall be able to improve.

Not often will you find this subject treated in letters of Dodsley's age so honestly.

Robert Dodsley was born in 1704 at Mansfield, in Nottinghamshire; was educated at the grammar school in the town, and at an early age went out as footman to Charles Dartiquenave (Swift's Dartineuf), passing in 1728 into the service of the Hon. Jane Lowther, the third daughter of the first Viscount Lonsdale. Of his life of servitude Dodsley seems never to have been ashamed, although once or twice in later years the fact was thrown at him insultingly. Indeed, his first publication was a poem entitled "Servitude," and in 1732 he brought out a fuller portrait of his life in "A Muse in Livery: or the Footman's Miscellany." There is a certain frank sincerity in such lines as these:

> And first,
> As soon as laziness will let me,
> I rise from bed, and down I set me,
> To cleaning glasses, knives and plate,
> And such-like dirty work as that,
> Which (by the bye) is what I hate.
> This done, with expeditious care,
> To dress myself I strait prepare;
> I clean my buckles, black my shoes;
> Powder my wig, and brush my clothes;
> Take off my beard, and wash my face,
> And then I'm ready for the chace.

His first important success was a short play in prose, called "The Toy Shop," which was produced with gratifying success in 1735. With the money from this and a present from Pope he set up as publisher and bookseller in Pall Mall. Though evidently fairly cautious in his ventures, he had the rare union of literary taste and business sense which makes the great publisher. Johnson, Pope, Young, Shenstone, Chesterfield, Gray, Walpole, Spence, Burke, Akenside, Joseph Warton, Lyttelton, and Jarvis are some of the names that helped to make Tully's Head famous. Of his own editorial work the "Collections" and the "Old Plays" are too well known to need more than mention here. His play of "Cleone," though fairly successful on the stage, has passed into complete oblivion, nor, we think, was it so original in its domestic tone as Mr. Straus would have it. Mr. Straus does not attempt to revive a spurious interest in this play, any more than in the other forgotten works of Dodsley. But he rather jealously, and with good evidence, vindicates "The Œconomy of Human Life" for his subject, and calls attention to the grace of the fairly well-known song: "One kind kiss before we part." We will not quote those charming stanzas, but close, rather, with the poem "On Tully's Head in Pall Mall," which was written at the time of "Cleone" in 1756, by Richard Graves, the friend of Shenstone and Jago, author of "The Spiritual Don Quixote" (would the novel were as inspired as its name!) and many other books which have made themselves forgotten. We doubt if a neater or better deserved laurel was ever placed on publisher's brow:

> Where Tully's bust and honour'd name
> Foint out the venal page,
> There *Dodsley* consecrates to fame
> The classics of his age.
>
> In vain the poets, from their mine,
> Extract the shining mass,
> Till Dodsley's mint has stamp'd the coin,
> And bid the sterling pass.
>
> Yet he, I ween, in *Cæsar's* days,
> A nobler fate had found;
> Dodsley himself with verdant bays
> Had been by *Cæsar* crown'd.
>
> His bust near *Tully's* had been plac'd,
> Himself a classic bard;
> His works Apollo's temple grac'd,
> And met their just reward.
>
> But still, my friend, be virtue, sense,
> And competence thy share;
> And think each boon, that courts dispense,
> Beneath a poet's care.
>
> Persist to grace this humbler post;
> Be *Tully's* head the sign;
> Till future booksellers shall boast
> To vend their tomes at *thine*.

The Drama of Saint Helena. By Paul Frémeaux. Translated from the French by Alfred Rieu. New York: D. Appleton & Co. $3 net.

This is a translation of M. Frémeaux's "Les Derniers Jours de l'Empereur," which was crowned last year by the French Academy. As the author confined his account to the period after July, 1817, it would have been well to translate the title more literally. But if a sensational title must be chosen, it would be more appropriate to say The Tragedy of Saint Helena. For the author's point of view is tragic—the horrible climate, Hudson Lowe's enormities, Napoleon's agonies. In a subject on which so much has been written, one takes up a new book with scepticism as to its justification. Yet this one has a real value as a description of the fallen Emperor's external surroundings and internal disorders.

To give an adequate account of the scene of Napoleon's last years, the author has studied the works relating to St. Helena itself. He describes the winds and the rocks, and the flora and fauna, and their relation to the exile. The reader may see a plan and views of Longwood, and learn of the use, and furniture, of each room from the cracked range in the kitchen to the faded carpet and gorgeous gold and silver toilet articles in the Emperor's own nine by fifteen-foot bedroom. On a map of the island he may trace the "four-mile limit" around Longwood, within which Napoleon was left undisturbed, and the "twelve-mile limit," within which he could walk freely, if accompanied by an English officer. A telegraph station, on a rock commanding Longwood and the sea, signalled to Hudson Lowe and to the port information of Napoleon's movements and of the approach of any vessel to the island.

The author also has an especial interest in the minutiæ of Napoleon's illness, and its symptoms. He has not only made good use of the well-known accounts left by Doctors Warden, O'Meara, and Antommarchi, but he has also gained many bits of information from the less known statements of Walter Henry, Dr. Arnott, and Dr. Stokoe. He even turns to his use points picked up from Napoleon's cooks, after they returned to Europe, and is able to state in detail what Napoleon ate and what he did not eat in his last years. The ponderous Forsyth believed it better to draw a veil over the realistic details of an illustrious end. Not so M. Frémeaux. He is in deadly earnest to describe, as he says, "how the greatest of all warriors died nobly in bed." He agrees that the ultimate cause of death was cancer of the stomach, but thinks the end was hastened by poor food, bad climate, lack of exercise, and the ignorance of the attending physicians who persisted until within a few weeks of Napoleon's death in diagnosing and treating him for hepatitis. There is much in the book that to the non-Gallic mind reads like gossip, but it is gossip touched with the grace of imagination and wit.

Notes.

Henry Holt & Co. announce the early publication of a new novel by William de Morgan, which will probably be called "An Affair of Dishonor." The first volume of the American Historical Series, "Europe Since 1815," by Prof. Charles Downer Hazen of Smith College, will be published next week.

A new novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz, entitled "Whirlpools," will be published by Little, Brown & Co. early in June.

The Putnams announce for early publication a new volume of essays by A. C. Benson, entitled "The Silent Isle," also "The Valley of Aosta," by Felice Ferrero; and "Controversial Issues in Scottish History," by William H. Gregg.

A volume on the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the second in the series describing American Art Galleries, is announced by

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L. C. Page & Co. The book is by Mrs. Julia DeW. Addison.

A series of biographies which are intended to be in themselves a history of Western development, is announced by D. Appleton & Co. Prof. Clarence W. Alvord of the University of Illinois will undertake the editorship of the series. The biographies now in preparation are those of George Rogers Clark, William Henry Harrison, John Charles Frémont, and Charles Michel de Langlade.

Norwich University, at Northfield, Vt., plans an elaborate work of two volumes, giving a history of the university and a roster and sketches of the cadets, trustees, and professors. Vol. I will cover the years 1819-1866, and Vol. II, 1866 to 1910; each will contain the university history, so that an old student need purchase one volume only.

The Boston Public Library, according to the Fifty-eighth Annual Report, just published, contains nearly a million volumes, three-fourths of which are in the central library. While the home use of the books has fallen off slightly, the number and size of school deposits have increased in a gratifying degree. The cosmopolitan character of the library work is shown by the fact that the examining committee suggests that a new edition of the standard-fiction catalogue "should contain likewise the books in Yiddish"; and also that the newspapers taken are in twenty different languages, including one in Tagalese, published in the Philippines. It is interesting to note that there is a marked increase in the use of the branches in those quarters of the city where the foreign population is largest.

In 1908 Archibald Constable & Co. of London issued in three volumes a translation of Josef Redlich's "Procedure of the House of Commons." Reviewing the book at the time (April 9, 1908), the *Nation* said:

> This is a work of German thoroughness in point of scholarly research, and of a lucidity and philosophic grasp which is, we will not say more than German, but uncommon in any language. It is no surprise to find Sir Courtenay Ilbert, clerk of the House of Commons, speaking regretfully in his introduction of the fact that it had been left to an Austrian scholar to write a book which some competent Englishman ought long ago to have produced.

This excellent and standard work has now been put on the list of E. P. Dutton & Co. of New York.

Thorough-paced admirers of the Camden sage will take pleasure in Carlton Noyes's "An Approach to Walt Whitman," published by the Houghton Mifflin Co. Mr. Noyes tells something of Whitman's life, but the greater part of his little book is devoted to a reverent exposition of Whitman's art and philosophy. To Mr. Noyes "the very perfection" of Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" "is its limitation," whereas "Whitman challenges comparison with nature," and his appeal is limitless. "Whitman has in himself the instructive and absolute rightness of all natural things"; to him "God has given a special revelation of Himself," and "he was given to the world to bring to men a revelation of God."

"The Works of Sir John Suckling" (Dutton), including the poems, plays, and letters, make only a single comfortable volume, and are well worth printing complete in this convenient form. A. Hamilton Thompson furnishes a satisfactory introduction, and a body of notes which show more careful research than is often bestowed on these minor poets. Suckling's fame hangs almost upon a single exquisite poem, "A Ballad"—it might almost be said upon a single metaphor in that ballad: "Her feet beneath her petticoat." Much of his verse has indeed that peculiar carelessness—one might almost say amateurishness—which characterizes so many of the poets of that age. Yet there is good reading in such a drama as "The Goblins," and his poems, besides occasional beauty or wit, tell us more of the cavalier spirit than does many a history.

Ethel Rolt Wheeler's "Famous Blue-Stockings" (Lane) is another example of the amateur biographies, written chiefly by women, that are pouring from the British presses. Of the author's style the following sentence is a not altogether unfair specimen: "This essence has, of course, to be enmeshed in a cage of facts, or it will evaporate altogether." Of her learning we may guess from such a phrase as "these *Flora*." Of her accuracy the spelling of "Lyttleton" is witness. Of her insight into history, we may judge from her statement that "there was, perhaps, never an age when Epictetus as a teacher would have been so little understood"; when, as a matter of fact, the revival of a kind of pagan stoicism, exemplified in the "Regimen" of Shaftesbury, was one of the chief marks of the eighteenth century. Yet the book is not without merit. Considerable intelligence is displayed in selecting anecdotes that set forth the characters of Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Delany, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Thrale, and the other learned ladies of the period. In particular we commend the account of Mrs. Thrale's second marriage as on the whole the most sensible we remember having read. It was a happy stroke to judge the excitement caused by that event in accordance with the rules for female conduct enjoined in Mrs. Chapone's chapter On the Regulation of the Heart and the Affections in her "Letters to her Niece." Such a comparison is really illuminating. It shows how the passion of Mrs. *Frail* Piozzi, as Walpole dubbed her, aroused the grief and resentment of her admirers; and it shows, too, that the very fact of this contrast between her action and the ideal of the age was proof of some real lack of discipline in her character.

About S. G. Bayne's cheaply facetious book, "A Fantasy of Mediterranean Travel" (Harpers), there is nothing whatever remarkable, except that a publishing house of good standing lends its imprint to so distressing a performance.

Whether "Susan in Sicily," by Josephine Tozier (L. C. Page & Co.), is a novel masked in the form of travel letters or a genuine record of travel somewhat embellished for romantic effect, is a question that must be left to the higher criticism. The present writer, subject to correction, holds the latter view. In any case, Sicily imposes itself singularly little upon Susan in comparison with various delightful men, who promptly present themselves and are never rebuffed, and the love affairs of sundry of her acquaintances. There is, however, a capital sketch of the doings and opinions of a delightful Anglo-Sicilian family at Palermo. Otherwise, the circumambience is shadowed forth chiefly in misspelled Italian and in a few half-tone cuts. Susan travels in the jaunty mood, and her letters will be liked by those whose appetite for the sentimentally flippant has not been surfeited. All the love affairs end well, though the final status of Susan's heart is discreetly slurred. Her suitors may have feared her because she read "Theocrites." As a postscript is added a letter on the Messina earthquake, very vivid and purporting to be by an eye-witness. It has drastic touches that recall the reality, and if it is imaginary is of literary quality far superior to the average of this slight work.

Garret A. Hobart, twenty-fourth Vice-President of the United States, was in many respects a classic example of the self-made American. He had the advantage of good colonial stock on both sides, and of a college education, for which he entered active life in debt. After the ritual year of school teaching he followed the law. Never an eloquent speaker, he was turned by this defect towards the most lucrative form of practice, corporation law. His geniality and sagacity brought him wealth and prominence. At thirty he was Speaker of the Assembly of New Jersey, a few years later president of the State Senate. His influence is said to have counted for much in making New Jersey a Republican State. To us it seems that the political turnover was foregone. The moment New Jersey ceased to be mainly rural, and became, with a concurrent growth of manufactures, a dependency of the New York money market, it was written that the party of "prosperity" must prevail. An admirable counsellor and friend, a high-toned partisan, a man of increasing wealth and influence, Mr. Hobart was the kind of man from whom Vice-Presidents are chosen. Unhappily his health was already broken before his election, in 1896, and he died before his term was completed, being only fifty-five years old. Here is a fine and normal career, and one worth commemorating. Great qualities of imagination and originality were denied Mr. Hobart. He struck out no new paths, and left no memorable sayings. He cheerfully did the work that came to his hand, and the deeper political ferment of his times seems scarcely to have come into his consciousness. In his public aspect he was one of those almost impersonal forces that make for industrial consolidation. At one time he held three-score directorates. That he is rather a meagre subject for biography must now be evident. With taste and insight in the biographer something might have been done. Unhappily the official biographer, David Magie, D.D., has conceived his task in a parochial spirit, eking out the exiguity of his matter with commonplace comment, and adding unnecessary details of the last illness, death, and funeral. The book is on the lines of a family memoir and is pretty nearly negligible. After ransacking it thoroughly we have found only one revelation of importance. It appears that it was Mr. Hobart who persuaded President McKinley to despair of his peace policy and submit the Cuban dispute to Congress. Let us note the words of the biographer: "He [Mr. Hobart] realized that the time had come when the President must act in conformity with the feelings of the people or *lose his control over his own party*" (our italics). On a long drive, the date of which is not given, Mr. Hobart urged the Presi-

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dent "to forestall any action by the Senate to declare war against Spain," adding that otherwise the Senate would declare war of its own motion. "I can hold them back no longer," insisted the Vice-President. The drive was finished in silence, and in a few days the President's message was read in Congress. We should be glad of corroboration of this story. It is about the only instance in which Mr. Hobart appears in a tragic light or as a maker of history. It reveals his lack of the higher imagination and is inherently credible enough. This book is well printed and illustrated, and bears the Putnam imprint.

Following the practice of the German savant who builds up around himself a group of student followers and provides a means for the publication of their researches, Professor Vinogradoff has begun a series of "Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History" (Vol. I, Henry Frowde). He plans to issue an annual volume which shall contain one or two monographs. The character of the two monographs in the inaugural volume bespeaks success for the series. In the first, "English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution," Prof. Alexander Savine of Moscow makes a painstaking and critical examination of "Valor Ecclesiasticus," the great six-volume folio of figures which is the principal source for our knowledge of the revenues of the English monasteries just prior to the Protestant Reformation. He approached it with scepticism, as many have doubted its accuracy. But in spite of its many omissions and undervaluations, he came to the conclusion that it compared favorably in reliability with similar statistical records, and might be safely trusted by the historical investigator. Upon its statements he bases a careful study of the whole economic life of the monastic establishments under Henry VIII. His results are often in figures and somewhat technical, but are valuable for the student of the English Reformation.

The second monograph, "Patronage in the Later Empire," by Francis de Zulueta, barrister and fellow of New College, is an interpretation of the laws in the Theodosian and Justinian codes directed against private patronage. This was a common form of graft by which powerful patrons enabled favored peasants to evade the tax-gatherers. The author has confined his study mainly to the way in which this abuse developed in the Eastern provinces, especially Egypt, and his conclusions rest largely on an interpretation of recent papyri deciphered by Grenfell and Hunt. The monograph is valuable for its account of Egyptian land-tenure and village organization in the fifth century, and for its definition of the much disputed class of ὁμόλογοι γεωργοί. In a larger relation it throws some light on the weakening of the Roman tax system, and on the origin of the later feudal tie of lord and vassal.

"Inns, Ales, and Drinking Customs of Old England," by Frederick W. Hackwood (Sturgis & Walton) takes both the private and public view of its vast theme. We follow the individual British drinker in his joyous progress from mead, through ale, to beer, gin, and assorted spirits; and similarly we note the attitude of the realm gradually changing from solicitude lest ale be too scanty and dear to concern for drunkenness and worse incidents of public-house debauchery. There are digressions on the coffee houses, which as centres of good talk find tolerance; upon smoking, and upon tea-drinking, which is regarded as no manly thing. In general, Mr. Harkwood's political conclusions might be symbolized by Hogarth's famous prints Beer Street and Gin Lane. A nocturnal tramp in beer-soaked London and whiskey-soaked Glasgow would, we think, convince the temperance advocate that the fermented drink represents distinctly the lesser evil. Mr. Hackwood, whose concern with these matters is that of an excise reformer and man of the world, believes the "public" to be a permanent institution that must be regulated and reformed. On the whole, this book, with its many quaint illustrations and various antiquarian lore, deals with the picturesque side of the subject. It is capital reading, being fortified not merely by dry records, but by literary allusions and personal experiences. The writer has achieved the feat of compiling a book which, being frankly convivial in tone, has also claims upon those who regard unregulated tippling as a danger to the state.

The difficult question as to the right of a clergyman to remain in a church whose creed he has outgrown, or which he can accept only in a sense very different from that intended by its framers, is treated in an anonymous volume, "Confessions of a Clergyman" (London: George Bell & Sons). The author was reared in the orthodox circle of Anglicanism, and in early life was devoutly attached to the High Church party. Gradually he came under liberal influences, and, at length, discarded the sacerdotal view of the church and the ministry, together with belief in miracle. For every doctrine he was compelled to reject, he found, however, a better one to take its place, and truth more genuinely Christian for each dogma he cast aside. He resolved, therefore, to continue in the ministry, without loud proclamation of his rejection of current orthodoxy. He justifies his position by his own satisfaction in the new truths he has discovered and by the evident benefits of his ministry in the community in which he labors. The position is that of an increasing number of progressive men in the orthodox churches.

Gerolamo Rovetta, the Italian novelist and dramatist, died recently. He was born in Brescia in 1850. Among his writings were "Ninnoli," a volume of stories, and "Mater Dolorosa," a romance. He was author of many dramatic pieces, chiefly comedies.

Dr. Emil Schürer, professor of New Testament exegesis at the University of Göttingen, died in that town recently, at the age of sixty-six years. He was author of many works, among them "De Controversiis Paschalibus," Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi," and "Ueber den gegenwärtigen Stand der Johanneischen Frage."

Science.

Nautical Science. By Charles Lane Poor. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2 net.

This is a readable account of the solar system and of such other heavenly bodies as concern the navigator. It describes, in popular terms, the principles underlying the daily problem of determining a ship's position at sea; gives the formulæ employed in this work, with practical examples, and includes three valuable chapters on the causes and the phenomena of the tides. The scope of Professor Poor's subject required a much less comprehensive treatment of general astronomy than may be found in Dolmage's "Astronomy of To-day," and but little reference to those larger, fascinating studies in which the late Professor Newcomb was *facile princeps*. Within his self-imposed limits Professor Poor leaves nothing to be desired, however, so clear has he made what is essential to an intelligent use of the mathematical methods which he recommends.

Doubtless by design, he ignores the recent speculations as to the part which radium is believed by some to play in maintaining the temperature of the sun; he holds to the long-entertained view that the contraction of the sun's sphere and the impact of outside particles are adequate forces in themselves. Until more is known of radium, this is certainly safe ground.

Few illustrations of the relative sizes and distances of the members of our system are so apt as his in which he typifies the sun by a globular light twenty feet in diameter on top of the City Hall, New York, and places a large toy balloon in Bronx Park to represent the outer planet Neptune, the earth, to our humiliation, being a big orange at White Street. He is also happy in giving a comparative idea of velocities. The light which comes to us from the sun in eight and one-third minutes covers a path the Mauretania would take more than four centuries to travel.

He appreciates rightly the importance of the Nautical Almanac, to which the sailor resorts for those astronomical data which are essential to his computations, and he does full justice to Astronomer Royal Maskelyne, its founder, and to Maskelyne's successors in England and America.

It would have tended to uniformity had he defined zenith distance as north (p. 190) when the zenith is north of the observed body, and thus kept to the sailor's phrase, "zenith bearing north." His examples of sights taken at sea are worked out in seconds of arc. If these examples are to serve as models to the navigator in ordinary days' reckoning, the seconds might well have been omitted. A saving of labor in computing and in logarithmic interpolation is thus obtained, with no real loss of accuracy. When an observed altitude is habitually affected by the rise and fall of the ship, it seems useless to regard it as true to within even ten seconds. Navigation being but an approximation at best,

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prudence dictates placing upon sextant sights no more reliance than they actually command. Working them out to seconds encourages a false confidence. A ship's position is well defined if known to within one minute of arc. No captain would be justified in running near the land in thick weather trusting to a fraction of a minute in his position because so shown by his observations.

Professor Poor's explanation of the tides is lucid and valuable. Many will be glad to have fuller explanations of these periodic movements of the water than the ordinary text-books contain. The book is handy in size and well printed. It will be welcomed by those for whom it was intended, "the general reader as well as the practical navigator."

Plans for establishment of a medical college, with an endowment of $5,500,000, the greater part of which has been promised, are announced by the trustees of Washington University, St. Louis. The proposed college will be on the lines of Johns Hopkins, according to the statement of the corporation, with especial attention paid to research work. Among the medical men who are to be on the new faculty are Dr. George Dock of Tulane University, Dr. John Howland of Bellevue Hospital Medical College, Dr. Eugene L. Opie of the Rockefeller Institute, and Dr. Joseph Erlanger of the University of Wisconsin.

William Phipps Blake, the geologist, died on Saturday at Berkeley, Cal., aged eighty-four years. After his graduation from the Yale Scientific School, in 1852, he was geologist and mineralogist for the United States Pacific Railroad Company, and later served both the Japanese and United States governments. He was made professor in the College of California in 1864, and professor of geology and director of the School of Mines of the University of Arizona in 1894. Professor Blake was a fellow of the Geographical Society of London, and a member of the American Philosophical Society, and of the American Institute of Mining Engineers. He wrote extensively. Among his books are "The Geological Reconnaissance, California," "Silver Ores and Silver Mines," "Ceramic Art and Glass," and "The Life of Capt. Jonathan Mix."

Drama.

Richard Le Gallienne is the author of "Orestes," a tragedy in two acts (Mitchell Kennerley), of which the acting rights are owned by William Faversham. It was designed to fit the music which Massenet composed for Leconte de Lisle's "Les Erinnyes," a fact which necessarily imposed certain restrictions upon the dramatist for which allowance must be made. In action it follows the outlines of Æschylus, but the dialogue, the development of the characters, and their motives, as Mr. Le Gallienne somewhat superfluously explains, are entirely his own. The work is more classic in form than it often is in spirit and expression, but is written on the whole—in spite of certain verbal eccentricities—in notably fluent and simple verse, admirably adapted for declamation, and contains passages of vivid description, emotional eloquence, and dramatic force. The speeches allotted to Cassandra are full of prophetic horror and despair, and the scene in which Orestes and Electra, at their first meeting, relate their several experiences is one of indisputable imaginative power. But the piece is much stronger in a literary than in a dramatic sense, and is, moreover, of uneven quality. At times it is hysterical and fantastic rather than tragic, while many of its phrases have a sort of affectation which suggests artifice and insincerity, and is antagonistic to the stern spirit of tragedy. There is, moreover, a lack of consistency in the important character of Electra, manifested not only in her relations with Ægisthus, but in the nature of her long appeal to the avenging Orestes, which is incongruous in sentiment and far too long for acting purposes. On the stage the piece would probably have to depend largely for success upon its musical and scenic accessories, but it is an ambitious effort, showing uncommon literary adroitness if little positive inspiration.

J. T. Krein and W. T. Stead are promoters of a plan to produce, in a small way, English plays on the Continent of Europe. They ask subscriptions of $25,000 in a letter to the London press, which goes on to outline the scheme: "We only propose, in the first instance, to make, as it were, a trial trip with a couple of plays in the foreign watering places during the summer season, say, 'As You Like It,' and either an old comedy or some typically modern play, such as 'The Importance of Being Earnest.' There is no notion of squandering money in engaging stars. We want a small, hard-working company of artists, who bring enthusiasm to their task of presenting their country's drama, as well as they can, before our foreign neighbors."

An English theatrical writer gives some account of "Typhoon," a play by an Hungarian dramatist which Sir Herbert Tree is to produce at His Majesty's in London, next season. Most of the characters in it are Japanese. The central figure is one Dr. Tokeramo, who is in England on a secret mission for the Japanese government. He has fallen into the toils of Helen Kernes, a beautiful but unscrupulous woman, who encourages him simply to further the ends of herself and her English lover, the poet Linden. The latter and his friends seek to provoke Tokeramo in many ways, but are unable to disturb his Oriental calm. But at last Helen, changing her tactics, tells him that she has been playing with him and pours contempt upon his caste and color. Beside himself with rage, he seizes her by the throat and drags her behind a curtain. There is a struggle, a silence—then the Oriental emerges, breathing heavily, but once more calm and collected. He rings up his friends. When they arrive, it is decided, according to Japanese custom, that some one must die for the better man. Hironari, therefore, takes the murder on himself. The next act is that of the murder trial. Everything goes against Hironari till Molly, a friend of Helen, identifies Tokeramo as Helen's lover, not the accused. Tokeramo then breaks down and confesses his guilt. But the judge, knowing the Japanese nature, regards this as an attempt to shield Hironari, the richer and higher caste Oriental. In the concluding act Tokeramo is a shattered man, but he has fulfilled his mission. Again he confesses his guilt, first to Linden, and afterwards to his friends, and at last, just before his death, succeeds in making them believe him. Thereupon, they decide that he was a victim of European culture. The play has been acted with much success in Europe.

Jules Renard, the French dramatist, author of "Poil de carotte," died in Paris on Saturday, at the age of forty-six years. He was born at Châlons-sur-Mayenne, and was educated at the Lycée de Nevers and the Lycée Charlemagne. Among his dramatic works are "Le Plaisir de rompre," "Le Pain de ménage," and "Ragotte." Other works are "L'Ecornifleur," "Crime de village," and "Nos Frères farouches."

Music.

The Singing Voice and Its Training. By M. Sterling MacKinlay. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $1.25 net.

The author of this volume enjoys the distinction of being the son of Antoinette Sterling and of having been the last student who had the benefit of the full four years' training under Manuel Garcia, the greatest vocal teacher of the last century. Most of his directions have, therefore, the authority of an *ipse dixit*, being based on what Garcia said in the class-room. What distinguishes this book from others of its kind is the attention paid to the need of expression. It is not the beginner alone who needs to be told that, besides a good voice, a singer who wishes to rise to eminence needs ninety-nine other things. The musical profession is "strewn with the shipwrecks of those who trusted in voice alone." The rock on which most of them come to grief is "sameness." There is not in their singing sufficient variety—variety in loudness, in pace, in accentuation, in phrasing, in tone-color.

The attention of teachers and students is called particularly to the author's remarks on the changes of timbre needful for the expression of diverse emotions. It is in this that the best singers of our time excel those of former times, largely because of the more intimate association of music with poetry. Mr. MacKinlay in this section goes beyond the lessons of his master, who was concerned mainly with the developing and polishing of the voice. In the paragraphs on tempo it is discouraging to find the old remark about *rubato* that disfigures so many books—the remark that the displacement of values occurs in the melody alone, the accompaniment being kept strictly to time throughout. No real artist ever renders a piece or song in this metronomic manner, yet all are taught to parrot the

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silly precept. Apart from this, we have found nothing to object to, except the author's suggestion that when a passage of notes occurs a second time during a song, it is sometimes advisable to make changes by the introduction of turns, appoggiaturas, or trills, "or by absolute alterations in the melody." He admits that this practice is rarely resorted to except in the old Italian airs. It certainly would not be tolerated in the music of our time.

While the remarks on expression constitute the most novel pages in this book, the chapters on voice training also deserve commendation, because of their lucidity. The important problem of breathing has new light shed on it by comparison of an athlete's breathing with a singer's, whose aims are almost diametrically opposed to the athlete's. Valuable directions are given for the cure of the tremolo. In the remarks on the classification of voices attention is directed to the fact that whether a singer is to be called a tenor or baritone, a soprano or contralto, is not so much a question of compass (high and low) as of the quality of tone. On the subject of "nasal" tone, also, the current notions persist in being incorrect:

> How often has one heard the remark that one can generally tell an American, because he speaks through the nose. It is perfectly incorrect; it is because the American does *not* speak through the nose. Some property of the ear [an obvious printer's error for air], or else the way of living, renders Americans liable to nasal catarrh, which totally or partially closes up the passage at the back of the nose communication between the nostrils and the pharynx. Hence the twang which we are wont to term "nasal."

The expenditures of the Grand Opéra in Paris last year were 4,107,436 francs. The new scenery for "Faust" cost 165,000 francs, that for "Monna Vanna" 35,000, and for "Götterdämmerung" 82,500.

Few modern poets have influenced music so much, and, in turn, been so greatly influenced by this art, as Björnsterne Björnson. By far the greater part of his significance in music is, of course, in those compositions which his works have called forth. Among these compositions, which number hundreds, are "Before the Convent Gate," which has been set to music by Grieg, O. A. Gröndahl, and the Dane, I. P. E. Hartmann; his "Bergliot" (a monologue), by Grieg and the Dane, Peter Heise; the music for his drama "Sigurd Jorsalfar" is by Grieg, that for "Mary Stuart" by Nordraak, for "The King" by Halvorsen, etc. Of songs for a single voice, with piano accompaniment, an all but endless list might be compiled; often one text has inspired a number of musicians, as "The Spinning Woman," for which there are six different settings, three by Norwegians and three by Danes, among them the deeply original Lange-Müller.

Pauline Garcia Viardot, a famous Spanish singer, who retired from the operatic stage in 1863, died last week in Paris, aged eighty-nine years. She was the daughter of Manuel Garcia, and sister of Mme. Malibran, and her death marks the passing of the last of that noted school. Mme. Viardot studied under Liszt, and achieved great success in Europe. She was the composer of several operas, and a number of vocal melodies and instrumental pieces.

Art.

Promenades of an Impressionist. By James Huneker, Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.50 net.

The vivacity of Mr. Huneker's style sometimes tends to conceal the judiciousness of his matter. His justly great reputation as a journalist critic most people would attribute to his salient phrase. To the present writer, the phrase goes for what it is worth—generally it is eloquent and interpretative, again merely decorative—what really counts is an experienced and unbiassed mind at ease with its material. The criticism that can pass from Goya, the tempestuous, that endless fount of facile enthusiasms, and do justice to the serene talent of Fortuny is certainly catholic. In fact, Mr. Huneker is an impressionist only in his aversion to the literary approach, and in a somewhat wilful lack of system. This, too, often seems less temperamental than a result of journalistic conditions, and of the dire need of being entertaining.

We like best such sober essays as those which analyze for us the technical contributions of Cézanne and Rodin. Here, Mr. Huneker is a real interpreter, and here his long experience of men and ways in art count for much. Charming, in the slighter vein, are such appreciations as the Monticelli, and Chardin. Seasoned readers of Mr. Huneker's earlier essays in musical and dramatic criticism will naturally turn to the fantastic titles in this book. Such borderline geniuses as Greco, Rops, Meryon, Gustave Moreau, John Martin, are treated with especial gusto. We should like to have an appreciation of Blake from this ardent searcher of fine eccentricities. In the main, the book is devoted to artists who have come into prominence since 1870, the French naturally predominating, but such precursors of modern tendencies or influential spirits as Botticelli, Watteau, Piranesi are included. Eleven "Museum promenades," chiefly in the Low Countries and in Spain, are on the whole less interesting than the individual appreciations—necessarily so, but this category embraces a capital sketch of Frans Hals at Harlem, while the three Spanish studies on the Prado Museum, Velasquez, and Greco at Toledo, are quite of the best. From the Velasquez, we transcribe one of many fine passages:

> His art is not correlated to the other arts. One does not dream of music or poetry or sculpture or drama in front of his pictures. One thinks of life and then of the beauty of the paint. Velasquez is never rhetorical, nor does he paint for the sake of making beautiful surfaces as often does Titian. His practice is not art for art as much as art for life. As a portraitist, Titian's is the only name to be coupled with that of Velasquez. He neither flattered his sitters, as did Van Dyck, nor mocked them like Goya. And consider the mediocrities, the dull, ugly, royal persons he was forced to paint! He has wrung the neck of banal eloquence and his prose, sober, rich, noble, sonorous, rhythmic, is, to my taste, preferable to the exalted, versatile volubility and lofty poetic tumblings in the azure of any school of painting.

Here we see how winning Mr. Huneker's manner is and how insidious. Unless you immediately react against that apparently innocent word "tumblings," your faith in the grand style will begin to disintegrate. It is this very sense of walking among pitfalls that will make the book fascinating to a veteran reader. The young are advised to temper it with an infusion of Sir Joshua Reynolds's "Discourses," *quantum sufficit.*

"Town Planning in Practice," by Raymond Unwin (Scribner's importation) is, as the title implies, a practical treatise on this revived art. Many plans and perspectives are given of German cities recently improved and of English suburban schemes. The active designer will find many hints for the treatment of large building areas. Such artifices as grouping suburban houses to enlarge the lots, breaking the building line, saving out orchards or playgrounds within the blocks, grouping buildings about forecourts or commons, parked treatment of four corners, etc., are fully illustrated. An especial merit of this book, however, is the generosity with which it offers beautiful and picturesque effects sketched in many ancient and modern cities. A careful study of these drawings should make for taste, and, after all, town planning is an art, and not a casual application of geometry. On the matter of formal or naturalistic design Mr. Unwin takes an opportunistic attitude. It depends, he thinks, largely on the lay of the land and the existing monuments in the city under consideration. On the other hand, an underlying formality is desirable. It would be folly to mimic the unconscious irregularities of mediæval towns. In short, the replanning of a city is a very delicate affair into which innumerable considerations enter. It is often better to do too little than too much. A recommendation of special interest to American designers is that proper public limits, both for town centres and for suburban areas, should be provided. If a town and its outlying districts be hemmed in betimes by clearly marked zones, that distressing shading off into shanties and cow sheds can be almost entirely prevented. The parked zones set a standard of upkeep, and draw to themselves a good class of buildings. In many instances it would unquestionably pay well to establish such zones in our older cities. Since this handsome quarto deals in a liberal spirit with the elements of the subject, it may be recommended to beginners. Architects generally will find in it

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an abundance of suggestive material, most of which fortunately is given in the form of plans to scale.

Franz Skarbina, painter, died in Berlin last week, at the age of sixty-one years. He studied in the Berlin Art Academy, and was made a professor, in 1888, of the Berlin University School of Art. In 1892 he was elected a member of the Academy for the Advancement of the Art of Engraving, and in 1905 a gold medal was awarded to him for his engraving, The Imperial Palace in Berlin on a Winter Afternoon. Among his best-known works are Evening of Life, Fish Market in Blankenberg, Noon in Ostend, and Villagers Playing Cards.

Finance.

AN INTERESTING CONTRAST.

Whatever else may be inferred from the series of remarkable episodes, whereby the general situation has been greatly and beneficially modified within the past six weeks, it is beginning to be appreciated to what extent the salutary results were achieved by the policies of what Europe has long described as high finance. There are occasions when the peremptory needs of one financial market are automatically provided for—in a genuine trade revival, for example. But there are also occasions when the automatic process will not answer, and one of those occasions had presented itself at the opening of April.

London, to begin with, found itself confronted, first with a wild and dangerous speculation by its public; secondly, with imminent contraction of its money market resources, through call for payment of $60,000,000 to $70,000,000 back taxes. These conditions had arisen at a moment when the Bank of England's position was weaker than in any spring-time season since 1899. New York was simultaneously confronted with unprecedented demands for investment capital; this at an hour when the investing public's surplus savings were curtailed through the high cost of living, and when an abnormal international trade situation blocked automatic recourse to Europe's open money market.

Here was a complicated situation. It was met in a manner which showed old-fashioned high finance at its very best. New York was, in any case, bound to export gold; but the Bank of England's policy was so regulated as to attract the $30,000,000 outflow into London. During the same period, other London banks were cautiously increasing their balances at the Bank of England. When, therefore, collection of the tax arrears began, after the Lords had, on April 28, adopted the long-deferred budget of 1909, the tax-money was withdrawn from the private deposit account of the Bank and transferred to its public deposit account. Private deposits have decreased $41,300,000 during the subsequent three weeks, along with increase of $43,500,000 in public deposits. That is to say, the tax payments have been made without ruffling the London money market.

Meantime New York had been watching the Wall Street bond market apprehensively, with an eye also to surplus bank reserves. High finance, having shifted $30,000,000 gold from New York to London, managed to place with Paris something like $50,000,000 of the railway loans which were overhanging Wall Street—undoubtedly impressing on Paris that if it did not take the loans, French gold would have to go to London. The result was relief to our bond market, a check to our gold exports, and a fall in our money market from 7 per cent. on April 28 to 3½ last week.

When European markets speak of the plans and purposes of high finance, it is this sort of operation which they have in mind. To understand, however, what is the true office of international high finance and what is not, the episode may be profitably contrasted with two other episodes. One was the international high finance of 1906. The strain on capital supplies was then world-wide; home and foreign markets were perplexed as to how legitimate trade requirements should be met. It was the business of great financiers to clear the decks and discourage unnecessary demands on credit. What happened was the beginning of wild speculation at New York, backed by our great banks and great capitalists and equipped with enormous sums of capital, borrowed from Europe and flung into the Stock Exchange at the hour when all of it ought to have been most jealously guarded for other purposes. The next year, everybody learned just how much sense there had been in the operation.

At this time in 1909, a spasmodic trade recovery had begun in the United States. It was clear that if this recovery were to continue unchecked, it would need for its own uses all our available supplies of capital. If it was premature and likely to break down, cautious husbanding of resources was advisable. But high finance concerned itself, that season, with fomenting an excited "bull movement" on the New York Stock Exchange, in moving heaven and earth to get a certain speculative stock listed on the Paris Bourse—an achievement which could have had no apparent result of service to any one, except the enhancement of its price. Into the wild speculation which accompanied this programme was absorbed the capital which the legitimate money market was sure to need in the autumn season. The sequel has been witnessed since December.

These contrasts suggest the query, what will be the attitude of high finance towards our markets during the rest of 1910. High finance cannot make crops grow, or turn an import balance into an export surplus. It can, however, use its influence to discourage untimely use of credit in stock speculation; restrain the advancing of bank money for the single purpose of raising commodity prices, and thereby both keep the capital fund in shape to use for legitimate purposes, and at least arrest the tendencies which created the recent unhealthy economic situation, and which, if continued, will create it again. This would be old-fashioned high finance. It is also possible, though one may hope not probable, for high finance to do what it did in 1906 and 1909—stimulate speculation, divert capital from channels where it is sorely needed into those which have no right to it, and thereby help towards upsetting things again. The character of the present situation is such as to make the programme of our great capitalists, for the balance of the year, peculiarly interesting.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

Agnel, G. A. D'. Les Comptes du Roi René. Tome 2 and 3. Paris: A. Picard & Fils.
American Sociological Society Publications. Vol. IV. University of Chicago Press. $1.60.
Baring, M. Landmarks in Russian Literature. Macmillan. $1.75.
Beers, H. A. Milton's Tercentenary. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
Bell, J. J. Wullie McWattie's Master. Revell Co. 60 cents net.
Bradley, W. A. The Garden Muse: Poems for Garden Lovers. Sturgis & Walton. $1.25 net.
Brockett, P. Bibliography of Aeronautics. Washington: Smithsonian Institute.
Bruce, P. A. Institutional History of England in the Seventeenth Century. 2 vols. Putnams.
Bryant, L. M. What Pictures to See in Europe in One Summer. Lane Co. $1.50 net.
Butler, S. Erewhon or Over the Range. Erewhon Revisited. Dutton. 2 vols., $1.25 net, each.
Butler's The Way of All Flesh. Dutton. $1.50 net.
Colbron, G. I. Joe Müller: Detective. Duffield.
Congrès des Associations Internationales (Bruxelles, 1910). Rapport 1, 2, and 3. Bruxelles.
Crosby, O. T. Strikes: For the Buyers and Sellers of Labor. Putnam. $1.25 net.
Day, E. H. Ober-Ammergau and The Passion Play. Milwaukee, Wis.: Young Churchman Co. 45 cents net.
Deeping, W. The Rust of Rome. Cassell. $1.20 net.

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Dewey, J. The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy. Holt.
Dewing, A. S. Life as Reality: A Philosophical Essay. Longmans, Green. $1.25 net.
Doumic, R. George Sand. Trans. by A. Hallard. Putnam. $2.75 net.
Eccles, F. Y. A Century of French Poets. Dutton. $3 net.
Edwardes, T. Lift-Luck on Southern Roads. Macmillan. $1.50 net.
Euripides' Iphigenia in Tauris. Trans. into English verse, with notes, by Gilbert Murray. Frowde. 75 cents.
Evans, H. Sir Randal Cremer: His Life and Work. Boston: Ginn & Co. $1.40 net.
Farrington, F. E. French Secondary Schools. Longmans, Green. $2.50.
Feuillerat, A. John Lyly: Contribution à L'Histoire de la Renaissance en Angleterre. Putnam. $4 net.
Frere, C. F. The Cookery Book of Lady Clark of Tillypronie, arranged and edited. Dutton. $2 net.
Frothingham, A. L. Roman Cities in Italy and Dalmatia. Sturgis & Walton. $1.75 net.
Fuller, T. E. The Right Hon. Cecil John Rhodes. Longmans, Green.
Gallon, T. Dead Man's Love. Brentano. $1.50.
Gascoyne-Cecil, W. Changing China. D. Appleton.
Gibbs, P. The Street of Adventure. Dutton. $1.25 net.
Goetchius, M. L. Anne of Tréboul. Century Co. $1.20 net.
Grew, J. C. Sport and Travel in the Far East. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. $3 net.
Halsted, L. B. A Victorious Life. Metropolitan Press. $1.50.
Hamilton, J. J. The Dethronement of the City Boss. Funk & Wagnalls. $1.20 net.
Hapgood, H. Types from City Streets. Funk & Wagnalls. $1.50 net.
Harrison, J. S. The Teachers of Emerson. Sturgis & Walton. $1.50 net.
Hazard, C. The College Year: Vesper Addresses in Wellesley College Chapel, by the President. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. $1.25 net.
Hedrich, E. R., and Kellogg, O. D. Applications of the Calculus to Mechanics. Boston: Ginn & Co. $1.25.
Hine, M. Half in Earnest. Lane Co. $1.50.
Hogarth, D. G. Accidents of an Antiquary's Life. Macmillan. $2.50 net.
Hunt, V. The Wife of Altamont. Brentano. $1.50.
Hymns of the Kingdom of God. Edited by H. S. Coffin and A. W. Vernon. Barnes Co.
Jourdain, M. An Outdoor Breviary. London: Academy Press.
Keeler, H. L. Our Garden Flowers. Scribner. $2 net.
Kephart, H. Camp Cookery. Outing Pub. Co. $1 net.
Lampe, W. E. The Japanese Social Organization. Princeton Univ. Press. 50 cents.
Lanciani, R. The Roman Forum: a Photographic Description of Its Monuments. Stechert & Co. $1.50 net.
Letters to My Son. Anonymous. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. $1 net.
Lincoln, J. C. The Depot Master. Appleton. $1.50.
Longman's Historical Illustrations: England in the Middles Ages. Portfolios I, II, III, IV.
Lough, W. H. Corporation Finance. Vol. IV, Modern Business. Alex. Hamilton Institute.
Lyde, L. W. Man in Many Lands: An Introduction to the Study of Geographic Control. London: A. & C. Black.
MacArthur, R. S. Precepts and Prayers: Souvenir for the Fortieth Anniversary of the Pastorate. Treat & Co.
MacChesney, N. W. Abraham Lincoln: Commemorative of the Lincoln Centenary and Containing the Principal Speeches Made in Connection Therewith. Chicago: McClurg. $2.75 net.
Macdonald, D. B. Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. In Arabic from a Bodleian MS. From the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April, 1910.
McInnes, T. In Amber Lands. Poems. Broadway Pub. Co. $1.
Meredith, G. Memorial Edition. Vols. VII, VIII, IX, X. Scribner.
Miller, B. Leigh Hunt's Relations with Byron, Shelley, and Keats. Macmillan. $1.25 net.
Mordecai, M. The Flower of Destiny. Putnam. $1.50 net.
Packer Collegiate Institute. Fifty-seventh Annual. Brooklyn, N. Y.
Payne, W. M. Björnson, 1832-1910. Chicago: McClurg. 50 cents net.
Pratz, C. de. The Education of Jacqueline. Duffield.
Redway, J. W. All Around Asia. Scribner.
Rice, P. Tangles Untangled. Ogilvie Pub. Co. 25 cents.
R. L. S. Pan's Pipes. Houghton Mifflin.
Roe, A. S. China As I Saw It. Macmillan. $3 net.
Rogers, J. F. Life and Health. Lippincott. $1.
Sabatini, R. Arms and the Maid. Putnam. $1.25 net.
Sapir, E. Takelma Texts. Anthropological Publications. University of Pennsylvania. Vol. II, No. 1.
Saunders, A. Maritime Law. Second edition, enlarged.
Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge. Vol. VII. Funk & Wagnalls. $5.
Seligman, C. G. The Melanesians of British New Guinea. Putnam. $7 net.
Senior, D. Caprice, Her Book. Macmillan. $1.50 net.
Smith, F. B. A Village of Vagabonds. Doubleday, Page. $1.50.
Smith, I. G. Thoughts on Education. Oxford: James Parker & Co.
Spargo, J. Karl Marx: His Life and Work. Huebsch. $2.50 net.
The Wild Olive: A Novel. By the author of "The Inner Shrine." Harper. $1.50.
Ticknor, C. A Poet in Exile: Early Letters of John Hay. Boston; Houghton Mifflin.
Tweedy, J. History of the Republican National Conventions from 1856 to 1908. Danbury, Conn.: John Tweedy.
United States Life-Saving Service. Annual report, for fiscal year ended June 30, 1909. Washington: Government Printing-Office.
Wager-Smith, E. Skat: Principles and Illustrative Games. Philadelphia: Lippincott. $1.25 net.
Whitefield, C. T. A Plain American in England. Doubleday, Page.
Wilbur, M. A. Every-Day Business for Women. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. $1.25 net.
Williams, H. S. The Science of Happiness. Harper. $2 net.
Yale College, Class of 1865. Plainfield, N. J.: W. C. Duyckinck, class secretary.
Young, J. B. Charms of the Bible. Eaton & Mains. $1 net.

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